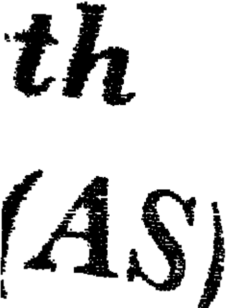




TEHRAN TIMES

4-Page Special Issue Inside

20 PAGES, PRICE 200 RIALS

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India, Pakistan Hold "Ice-Breaking Meeting" on Kashmir

KARACHI — Pakistani Foreign Minister Gohar Ayub Khan returned from New Delhi Wednesday saying he was satisfied with his "ice-breaking" meeting with Indian Foreign Minister Inder Kumar Gujral.

Khan, who met Gujral for 90 minutes in the Indian capital earlier in the day, told reporters the talks, which covered all problems including the "core" issue of Kashmir, were held in an "excellent" atmosphere.

(Contd on Pg. 14)

Primakov: Russia-NATO Accord Could Be Signed in Paris

PARIS — Russian Foreign Minister Yevgeny Primakov said on Wednesday that an agreement between Russia and NATO on their future relations might be signed in Paris on May 27.

Primakov was speaking after talks with President Jacques Chirac.

The Russian minister said Chirac had suggested the document be signed in Paris on May 27.

(Contd on Pg. 14)

Tajikistan Peace Negotiations Opens in Tehran





Photo: [illegible]

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN — A new round of Tajikistan Peace negotiations opened here on Wednesday with participation of Tajik Foreign Minister Talbek Nazarov, Representative of Tajik opposition Akbar Turjanzadeh and the UN special envoy for Tajikistan Gerd Dietrich Merrem.

Speaking at the inaugural ceremony of the talks, Iranian Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati expressed satisfaction over previous rounds of talks between Tajik government and the oppositions and called on regional countries to support the current peace talks.

The foreign minister further said that the Islamic Republic of Iran would leave no stone unturned to settle the problem of Tajikistan and that it would contribute to reconstruction and economic development of the republic.

Velayati hoped that the two sides would consider the accords already signed as the basis for further talks to reach understanding on issues that have yet to be resolved.

Nazarov addressing the opening ceremony of the peace

(Contd on Pg. 14)

Shia Leader Gunned Down in Pakistani Town

ISLAMABAD — Unidentified gunmen Wednesday killed a Pakistani Shia leader in the town of Khanewal in Punjab Province, the official Associated Press of Pakistan (APP) news agency reported.

Ali Hasan Jaffery, a former general secretary of Imamia Students Organization, was attacked by two men riding a motorbike as he was on his way home from his homeopathic clinic, the agency Said.

Police told APP the motive behind the killing was not known.

In January a bomb blast in the provincial capital, Lahore, killed 26 people, including a top leader of the Sunni Sipah-i-Sahaba Pakistan, Ziaur Rahman Farooqi.

The next month Iran's Cultural Center in the Punjab city of Multan was attacked by gunmen, killing seven people, including a senior Iranian diplomat.

(APP)

Velayati: Mutual Respect Indispensable to Tehran-Bonn Cordial Ties

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN — Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati said here on Wednesday that mutual respect is of vital importance for continuation of cordial relations between Iran and Germany, adding that Iran does not need to maintain relations with a country that disrespects its values.

The foreign minister was referring to a court dealing with the killing of a Kurdish leader whose murder case is being investigated by a court known as Mykonos case in Germany.

Speaking at a press conference on the sidelines of the Tajik Peace Talks, Velayati underlined that the Mykonos court has been politicized, and that Iran's reaction to the court verdict would be in accordance with the principles of the diplomacy of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

He reiterated that the Islamic Republic of Iran enjoys good relations with the German government and separates the account of the German government from that of the court.

"Our protest at the court is that a fugitive criminal named Banisadr has been used as a witness by the court. We consider this as politically-motivated and biased move," Velayati said.

He said, "we are willing to have good relations with the German government, but, no friendship could be unilateral."

Velayati expressed hope that German government would realize that Iran would never allow the *others to decide on its part or harm* its prestige and interest.

(Contd on Pg. 14)

Saudi Arabia Refuses to Reveal Information on Khobar Bombing

MECCA, Saudi Arabia — Saudi Arabia has information on the anti-U.S. bombing in Khobar last year but refuses to divulge any details before the investigation is complete, its interior minister said Wednesday.

"Saudi security services were able to gather a lot of information on the Khobar crime in the first hours" after the June 25, 1996, attack against a U.S. airforce *dormitory* that killed 19 American servicemen, Prince Nayef ibn Abdel Aziz told reporters.

"But we will not announce anything before the investigation is finished, it is in the interest of the investigation," Aziz said.

(Contd on Pg. 14)

TABARZADI:

Relations With U.S. Possible



Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN — A presidential hopeful, Heshmatollah Tabarzadi, elaborating on his objectives and policies told the *Tehran Times* that resumption of relations between Iran and the U.S. was possible if he won the elections.

Touching on the country's foreign policy, Tabarzadi underlined that according to the Constitution Iran can have relations with all countries that have not declared war against it, even the United States.

If we set up a powerful government, we will be able to have appropriate relations with the United States in line with our national interests, he said, adding that a strong popular base enables the government to establish ties with other countries except the Zionist regime.

He noted that in order to preserve the interests of vulnerable strata, it is essential to hold dialogue with the U.S. people and government directly.

Tabarzadi further underlined that the United States and the Western media should not be allowed to launch disinformation campaign against Iran at international arena.

He stressed that currently Iran's relations with certain countries are not cordial and that we should not provide our enemies with excuses, turning our friends into "enemy".

Asked to comment on his main objective of running for president, he said, carrying out social and economic reforms in the country was his main objective.

He stressed that the country's foreign and domestic policies as well civil rights codes should be revised and that all the reforms must be carried out within the framework of the constitution.

As for the characteristics of the next president, Tabarzadi reiterated that the next president should resist pressure groups and should not exert parochial approaches.

Asked whether he is competent enough to run for president,

(Contd on Pg. 14)

Bhutto Government Supported Taleban Directly

By Ali Rezvani Moqaddam

MECCA — "The government of former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto supported the Taleban militia directly," said Deputy Chief of the Tehreek-i-Jafria Movement, Heidar Ali Javadi.

Talking to the *Tehran Times* here, Javadi said that during the former premier's term, then Interior Minister Nasirullah Baber made some official visits with Taleban militia officials in Afghanistan and Pakistan announced in a number of occasions its support for Taleban.

Javadi, who is in Saudi Arabia *for the Hajj*, said that with

(Contd on Pg. 14)

New Clashes Break Out in Al-Khalil

THOUSANDS PROTEST KILLING OF PALESTINIAN BOY

AL-KHALIL, West Bank — Thousands of protesters marched Wednesday behind the flag-shrouded body of a Palestinian killed by Israeli troops, calling for revenge and suicide attacks against Israelis. New clashes broke out following the funeral.

At least 30 Palestinians were injured by rubber bullets, including at least two with bullet injuries to the head, hospital officials said.

Palestinian officials, meanwhile, said Israel must disarm Jewish settlers before peace talks could resume.

(Contd on Pg. 14)





AL-KHALIL, West Bank, (April 8): A stone thrown by a Palestinian youth falls on the helmet of an Israeli soldier in the West Bank town of Al-Khalil as new violence flare after an Israeli settler shot and killed a Palestinian. A meeting between Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and U.S. President Bill Clinton has failed to end the crisis in the peace process.

(AFP PHOTO)

TEHRAN TIMES

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In the Name of God

Go forth light and heavy, and strive hard in Allah's way with your property and your persons; this is better for you, if you know.

(HOLY QORAN) (9:41)

OPINION

Tajik Peace Talks to Drive Last Nail to Civil War's Coffin

Iran is currently host to a new round of talks between the Tajik opposition and government.

The previous rounds of talks held between the two sides indicate that the Tajik government and the opposition have reached a mutual understanding in sorting out their differences through negotiations to establish a comprehensive peace in the war-torn country. The first country announcing its readiness to mediate between the two sides to help restore peace, Iran is optimistic about the settlement of the remaining thorny issues between the two sides.

The Tajik peace talks can be used as a precedent for settling other regional problems, whether civil or problems between two countries. The bilateral recognition of government and the opposition, which showed their goodwill, should be considered as an important principle in other similar cases of crisis management.

The government of President Rakhmanov has duly acknowledged the religious feelings of the Tajik people which paved the way for the establishment of a reconciliation committee. The opposition also has realized that it is not possible to do away with the government and hence did not hesitate to recognize it.

Stability in Tajikistan is without doubt a precondition to development of that country. A durable peace in Tajikistan will definitely prevent material damages and human losses. Moreover a comprehensive peace agreement will indicate that the Tajik nation has matured politically.

The Islamic Republic of Iran has spared no effort to help settle regional disputes. Tehran has extended its material and spiritual supports to restore peace in its surrounding regions. We are ready to assist Tajikistan to accelerate the pace of its development once peace is restored to that country.

Let us hope that the final stages of Tajik peace talks pave the way for restoration of a comprehensive peace to that country, enabling it to fully reunite with other regional countries.

Kharrazi: NPT Not in Line With Its Goals



Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN — The operation of the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) has not been in line with its objectives, although the treaty has been established to contribute to the process of disarmament and cessation of nuclear arms race, the Permanent Representative of Iran to the UN Kamal Kharrazi said on Tuesday.

He made the remark in his address to the first session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2000 Review Conference of the parties to the NPT, held at the UN Headquarters, an IRNA report said.

He also said that establishment of nuclear weapon free zones is considered to be the first necessary step towards the elimination of nuclear weapons.

Kharrazi further said that in 1995 decisions were taken for strengthening of the review process of the NPT extending it indefinitely. A resolution on the Middle East was also adopted in 1995.

"Nonetheless, the long term vitality of NPT and its success depend greatly upon how well the parties to the treaty work together in the years ahead in order to fulfil their commitments undertaken during the 1995 conference as well as the full compliance with the provisions of the NPT," he pointed out.

Further in his address, the Iranian representative added that one of the fundamental objectives of the treaty is seriously undermined unless the nuclear free zones are established.

"In the Middle East, the Israeli nuclear threat must be checked. We therefore, underline the commitments in the declaration to pursue this issue as well as the establishment of a nuclear weapon free zone in the Middle East as a matter of priority," Kharazi stressed.

Based on this agreement Israel should be demanded to place all its nuclear facilities under comprehensive safeguard agreements, he said adding that the reported possession by Israel of nuclear weapons and its refusal to accept international control has a grave destablizing effect in the Middle East. This, he said requires attention of the international community.

"Resolution of this problem is an essential requisite to diminish nuclear threat perceptions in the region as well as to smooth the way towards securing a truly universal treaty," he added.

He continued that all efforts should be made to implement the treaty in all its aspects to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons. "Of course, this should by no means hamper the peaceful use of nuclear energy. The states parties to the NPT which are in compliance with their obligations under the treaty and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguard agreements, should be ensured unimpeded access to nuclear material, equipment and technology for peaceful purposes, as envisaged in Article IV and other provisions of the treaty."

Elsewhere in his address, Kharrazi said, "The declaration on principles and objectives recognizes that with the end of the Cold War, international tension has eased, and therefore, trust between states has strengthened nuclear disarmament on the basis of the text of the treaty.

"If the nuclear powers inclined to demonstrate their unequivocal commitment to Article VI of the NPT and to the elimination of nuclear weapons, they should agree to begin immediate negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament, on the legal instruments relating to the following matters:

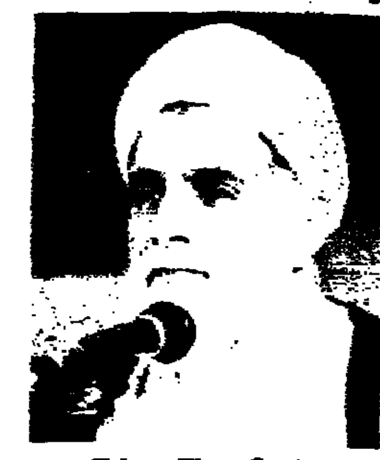
1- To achieve a program of action for significant reduction and total elimination of nuclear warheads and their delivery vehicles within a time bound frame at a target date.

2- To prohibit the production and stockpiling of fissile material for weaponry purposes.

3- To prohibit the threat or use of nuclear weapons.

4- To provide effective, unconditional and comprehensive security assurances, both positive and negative, to non-nuclear weapon states. These assurances can be also provided to the non-nuclear weapons state members of the NPT through a protocol annexed to the NPT to be adopted by the 2000 Review Conference.

Nateq Nouri Due in Moscow Today



Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN — During the visit of Majlis Speaker Ali Akbar Nateq Nouri to Moscow, several key agreements including the agreements will be signed on manufacture of Topolov 334 aircraft in Iran, industrial, scientific and cultural cooperation, manufacture of underground locomotives and wagons and one on supervision of exports.

Hojjatoleslam Nateq Nouri is to start his official visit to Moscow today at the head of a high-ranking delegation, IRNA reported.

During his four-day visit, the speaker is scheduled to meet President Boris Yeltsin, Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin, Foreign Minister Yevgeny Primakov and several other officials. He will also meet the leader of the Orthodox Church, Alexi II.

Expansion of bilateral relations, regional cooperation and the latest international developments will be high on the agenda of speaker's talks with the Russian officials.

Hojjatoleslam Nateq Nouri is to address the Russian Duma on Friday.

The speaker is also scheduled to visit Kazan on Saturday where he will meet with President Mintemir Shaimov of Tatarstan. While in Kazan, an agreement on expansion of Iran-Tatarstan trade relations will be signed.

Bruncian King to Attend Tehran OIC Summit

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN — "King Hajji Hassanal Bolkiah of Brunei has expressed readiness to attend the 8th summit meeting of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) due to be held in Tehran in December," Education Minister Mohammad Ali Najafi said here yesterday.

Speaking to reporters upon arrival from Bandar Seri Begawan, capital city of Brunei, the education minister said that his three-day visit was in response to the visit of his Bruneian counterpart, Pehin Haji Abdul Aziz, to Tehran.

He added that during his meeting with King Bolkiah, he presented the message of President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani to the king, inviting him to attend the OIC summit meeting here.

Sending warm greetings to the Leader, Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei, and to President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, the Bruneian king said that the government and people of Brunei consider the Iranian government and nation as their ally and brother, respectively, and are therefore eager to expand cooperation in all dimensions, Najafi said.

The Iranian minister called the outcome of his talks with Bruneian high-ranking officials fruitful, saying that during his visit several agreements were reached on the exchange of professors and students to upgrade joint research and academic cooperation between the two countries.



Russian Foreign Ministry Underlines Expansion of Ties With Iran

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN — Russia attaches great importance to expansion of relations with the neighboring countries, particularly with Iran, the Spokesman of the Russian Foreign Ministry Valery Nesterushkin said in Moscow Wednesday.

Speaking to IRNA on the eve of the imminent visit of the Iranian Majlis Speaker Hojjatoleslam Ali Akbar Nateq Nouri to Moscow, Nesterushkin added that Iran and Russia enjoy common interests and viewpoints in the region.

He added that Tehran-Moscow cooperation has experienced a dramatic increase in the recent years.

Nesterushkin added that Russia considers the visit of Iranian speaker as an step towards further promotion of bilateral relations.

The Iranian speaker is to start a four-day official visit to Moscow on Thursday (today) at the head of a high-ranking delegation.

Another IRNA report quoted a prominent professor at the International Relations Institute of the Russian Foreign Ministry as saying that the speaker's visit to Moscow will mark the beginning of a major change in the future trend of Iran-Russia cooperation.

Velayati Confers With Tajik FM, Opposition Leader



NAZAROV



VELAYATI



NOURI

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN — Critical situation in Tajikistan was reviewed in a meeting here Tuesday between the visiting Tajik Foreign Minister, Talbak Nazarov, and his Iranian counterpart Ali Akbar Velayati.

Nazarov, who is currently here to attend the Tajik peace talks, briefed Velayati on the outcome of the Moscow round of Tajik peace talks, an IRNA report said.

He expressed hope that Tehran peace talks will be constructive and will produce positive results.

Voicing Iran's willingness to help bring an end to the critical situation in Tajikistan, Velayati reiterated that the Islamic Republic is ready to help and provide facilities to both belligerent sides to solve problems of the Tajik nation.

He urged both the Tajik government and the opposition to remove the existing obstacles and restore peace and tranquility to the country through peaceful negotiations.

Velayati stressed that a powerful and independent Tajikistan is vital for stability in Central Asia and the whole region.

In a separate meeting Tuesday night with the leader of the Tajik opposition Abdullah Nouri and his deputy Akbar Turajonzodah, Velayati discussed the Tajik crisis on the eve of the Tehran peace talks.

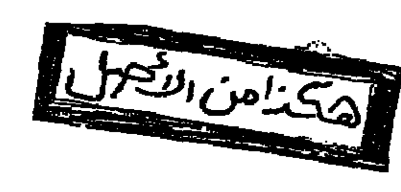
Briefing Velayati on the latest developments in Tajikistan and the outcome of Moscow peace talks, Nouri thanked Iran for hosting several rounds of peace talks.

He said that the recent positive developments in relations between the Islamic Republic of Iran and the regional countries are the result of Iran's peaceful and principled policies.

Stressing the peace-seeking objectives of his party, Nouri noted that implementation of agreements reached between the Tajik government and the opposition would lead to establishment of peace in his country.

Velayati said that Iran is ready to provide all facilities to the Tajik belligerent sides as the host country of the peace talks.

He also stated that the Tajik crisis will only be solved through peaceful means and negotiations.



PRESIDENT:

Acceptance of Iran-Made Vehicles in World Markets Certain



Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN — President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani here yesterday expressed confidence world markets will welcome Iranian-manufactured vehicles.

Speaking at the inaugural ceremony yesterday of the Vehicle Investigation and Renovation Center here, he called for more rapid assessment and modernization of the motor vehicle industry.

He said that with reliance on the committed and innovative workers of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the goal of self-sufficiency of the country now becoming a reality after eight years of development plans, the entry of the motor vehicle industry of the country in international markets will soon be a reality.

The president underlined that economic pressures from certain countries have not dissuaded people here from proving their mettle in entrepreneurship and from competing in international markets. Referring to the manufacturing of spare parts in Iran as a big step in self-sufficiency, he said that Iranian-made spare parts are competing with similar types in international markets. Minister of Industry Mohammad Reza Nematzadeh, on the same occasion, gave a report on the vehicle-manufacturing process in Iran.

He said that within the next five years hard currency required by the vehicle industry would be obtained from the export of spare parts.

2nd Gathering on Religion in the Eye of Cinema to Be Held in Tehran

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN — The Second gathering on Religion in the Eye of Cinema will be held in Tehran 11 April, Head of the Arts Bureau of the Islamic Propagation Organization, Hojjatoleslam Zam, told reporters yesterday.

Zam said the five day seminar, sponsored by the bureau, aims to provide answer to some ambiguous points on the relation of religion with cinema.

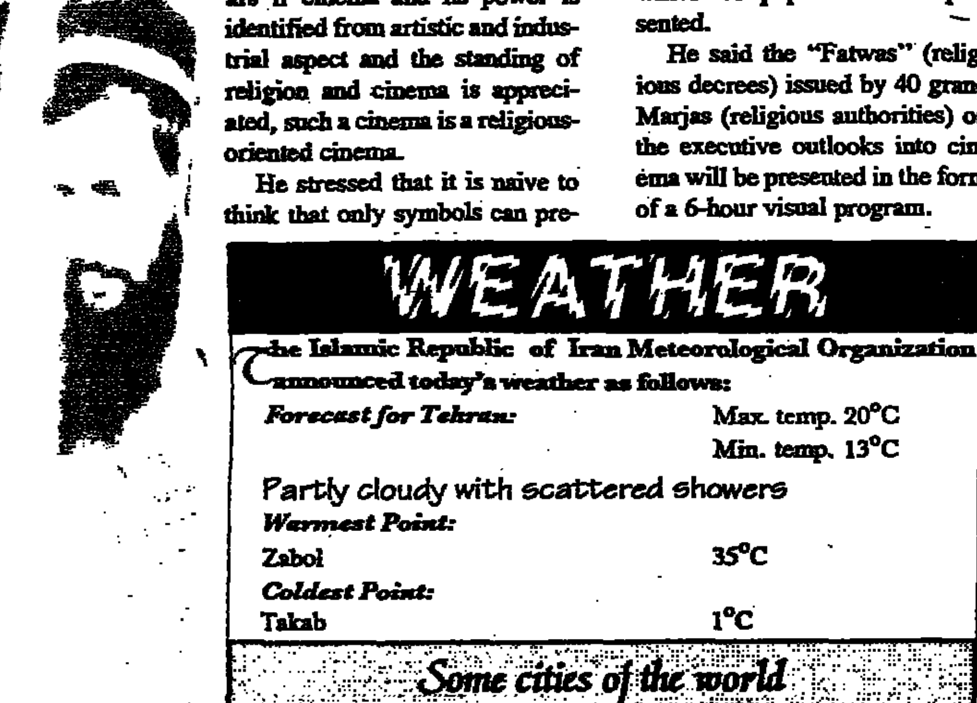
Hojjatoleslam Zam said from the viewpoint of religious scholars if cinema and its power is identified from artistic and industrial aspect and the standing of religion and cinema is appreciated, such a cinema is a religious-oriented cinema.

He stressed that it is naive to think that only symbols can present cinema as being religious, and added that in fact this mentality has stirred doubt as to the relationship between religion and cinema.

Head of the Arts Bureau of the Islamic Propagation Organization noted that the seminar will conduct a specialized study of the relationship between cinema and religion.

Secretary of the seminar, Ali Afkhami, said thus far 60 specialized papers have been sent to the secretariat of the seminar, of which 40 papers will be presented.

He said the "Fatwas" (religious decrees) issued by 40 grand Marjas (religious authorities) on the executive outlooks into cinema will be presented in the form of a 6-hour visual program.



WEATHER

The Islamic Republic of Iran Meteorological Organization announced today's weather as follows:

Forecast for Tehran: Max. temp. 20°C
Min. temp. 13°C

Partly cloudy with scattered showers

Warmest Point:
Zabol 35°C

Coldest Point:
Takab 1°C

Some cities of the world

Cities	Max. °C	Cities	Max. °C
Riyadh	34	Vienna	9
Istanbul	6	Moscow	1
Rome	14	Madrid	16
Athens	—	Abu Dhabi	35
London	17	Karachi	31
Paris	20	New Delhi	—
Frankfurt	—	Kuwait	—

Iran Participates in 97th IPU Meeting

TEHRAN — An Iranian parliamentary delegation arrived in Seoul to take part in the 97th meeting of the Inter-Parliamentary Union.

The Iranian delegation is hand in a proposal to the conference titled, "refugees and the displaced- crisis of the today's world".

At the five day conference, different issues, including cooperation for global stability and security, respect for independence and sovereignty of countries and planning in line with consumption pattern will be discussed.

Maghrib, Egypt and Lebanon will also make proposals to the conference which are related to Middle East crisis and the recent developments in the region as well as efforts made by Israel to change the demographic composition of the region. *(IRNA)*

Fourth Int'l Congress of Iran Dental Association to Open Soon

Tehrah Times Service

TEHRAN — The Fourth International Congress of Iran Dental Association is slated to open Tuesday, April 15, 1997, at Tehran's Permanent International Fair grounds.

Secretary of the congress, Abbas Honardoost, told reporters here yesterday that some 7,000 dental specialists are expected to attend the congress.

Honardoost, who is also the head of the board of directors of the association, added that 42 world-renown experts and dental professors from Azerbaijan, Australia, Germany, Slovakia, Austria, Sweden, Belgium, Britain, Egypt, U.S. and India will be participating, and a total of 50 papers will be presented.

He said the theme of the congress is "Oral Health and Prevention," two important factors in the emergence of acute problems of the mouth and the teeth, and the subject of decreasing heavy costs for dental treatment.

The executive manager of the congress said that. concurrent with the holding of the congress an exhibition will be held to display products manufactured by local manufacturers.

Temor Jolts Northwestern Town

ARDEBIL — A tremor measuring 4.1 degrees on the open-ended Richter Scale jolted the provincial town of "Nir" in northwestern Iran at 10:14 hours local time (6:44 gmt) on Tuesday.

The seismographic center in the area has recorded the epicenter of the quake at 35 km west of Ardebil in the town of Nir.

Governor of Nir, Morteza Baqerzadeh, said the quake caused no loss of life, but damaged some residential houses that had already sustained losses in a strong quake which hit the area in February.

A killer earthquake shook Ardebil on February 28, leaving 965 people dead and 2,600 others wounded. *(IRNA)*

500bn Rial Budget for Unexpected Events

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN — The Deputy for Coordination of Development Affairs of the Interior Ministry, Rasool Zargar, announced that this year's budget of the headquarters for unexpected events amounts to 500 billion rials, indicating a 20 percent increase compared to the previous year.

He said yesterday that 300 billion rials out of the total amount is taken from the budget of the government while the rest will be raised from banking credits.

Zargar further said that in the current Iranian year the reconstruction work of 52,000 damaged residential units will be followed up.

He estimated the rate of damage caused by unexpected events in 1979 at 270 billion rials, caused mostly by earthquake.

Iran's Inclusion in CW Treaty Poses Dilemma for U.S.

LONDON — With less than three weeks, time is running out for the U.S. to ratify the new chemical weapons convention before being treated as a "rogue state."

The main dilemma for the U.S. is being tarnished with the same smears it tries to use against other countries, like Iran and Cuba, which along with some 70 other states, have already ratified the treaty drawn up in Paris over four years ago.

The danger of being seen as a 'rogue state' was underlined by U.S. President Bill Clinton, speaking to reporters in Washington Tuesday, saying the rest of the world would be compelled to "basically ostracise us and impose trade sanctions on our chemical companies."

Ratification treaty needs a two-thirds majority vote from the 100- seat senate by April 29, but faces opposition lead by the Republican Chairman of the foreign relations committee, Jesse Helms, who has denounced the treaty as "dangerous and defective."

His criticism, according to his aides quoted by the *Financial Times* Tuesday, include wanting guarantees U.S. commanders could still use tear gas and assurances that the secrecy of U.S. business information would not be compromised through inspectors.

To added to his argument, Helms invited three former defense secretaries, Caspar Weinberger, James Schlesinger and Donald Rumsfeld, to committee hearings, who claimed that the U.S. would have a freer hand in preventing the spread of poison gas if it stayed out. They were said to argue that joining the treaty, which obliges participants to trade freely in chemical technologies, would "constrain U.S. policy in dealing with such states as Cuba and Iran."

Conversely, the chemical manufacturers association has estimated that the U.S. would lose $600 million of business by staying out and be subjected to restrictions as a 'rogue state.'

(IRNA)

Syrian Papers Criticize Clinton-Netanyahu Meeting

DAMASCUS - The meeting in Washington between President Clinton and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu was a disappointment because it failed to break the deadlock in the Mideast peace process, state-run Syrian newspapers said Wednesday.

Negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians have collapsed amid Palestinian anger over Israel's decision to go ahead with a housing project for Jews on war-won Arab land in east Jerusalem. Negotiations between Israel and Syria have been suspended for more than a year. Syria demands the return of the Golan Heights, captured by Israel in the 1967 middle east war, in exchange for peace. But Israel's hard-line prime minister says the heights are critical to Israeli security.

"Netanyahu emerged from the White House with excessive intransigence, defiance and adherence to his settlement project and the judaization of Jerusalem," the government-run Al-Thawra daily said in an editorial.

"The Washington meeting was a complete disappointment since it failed to break the stalemate in the peace process," the paper said.

It warned that there will be no peace in the Middle East as long as Netanyahu is in power and the U.S. treasury is "wide open before him."

Tishrin, another government daily, said Netanyahu wrapped up his visit to Washington "without budging, not an inch, from his anti-peace stand and proposals."

It appealed to the international community to take steps to "counter Israel's hostile policy" and to force the Jewish state to accept the principle of trading land for peace, which has underpinned negotiations since 1991.

Netanyahu's visit to Washington ended Monday with no movement on the peace process. Clinton assured Netanyahu that Israel should never "have to bargain to be free of terrorism."

An editorial in the influential Al-Hayat, a Saudi-owned newspaper, said the situation in the the Palestinian areas had become so desperate that Arabs now found it difficult to condemn suicide bombings against Israelis.

It also suggested that Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat leave for exile again in the face of Israel's decision to go ahead with the controversial Har Homa settlement in Arab east Jerusalem. "The only alternative is to return to the days of stone throwing and uprising that led to the peace process," said the London-based daily. It was a reference to the 1987-1993 Palestinian revolt against Israeli occupation.

The paper noted that after Israel and the Palestinians signed their first peace deal in September 1993, "We condemned suicide bombings as terrorist acts because there was hope for a comprehensive peace."

But with Israel taking unilateral action that hurts the Palestinians, the paper said it was changing its stance. "Now that we have lost that hope, we neither condemn nor support these actions," the editorial concluded.

(AP)

53 Kg Drug Haul in Aran-va-Bidgol

KASHAN — Law enforcement forces in the Aran-va-Bidgol near Kashan have confiscated 34 kilograms of morphine and 19 killiograms of opium this week, it was announced here on Tuesday.

The public relations department of the local law enforcement authority said that the drugs were hidden in a truck and that three smugglers were arrested. Some 1,138 smugglers and drug addicts were arrested and 303 kilograms of illegal drugs were confiscated in Kashan last Iranian calendar year (ended March 21).

(IRNA)

Armenian Minister Calls For Iranian Assistance in Mines

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN - The visiting Armenian Industries Minister, Ashout Safarain, conferred with Iranian Minister of Mines and Metals, Hussien Mahluji, here yesterday and called for Iranian technical and managerial assistance in mines sector in his country.

Referring to Iran's expertise in mines sector, Safarian called on Iranian experts on mines and metals to provide his country with services especially in extraction of decorative stones.

He told Mahluji that Armenia attaches great importance to the relation with Iran and voiced his willingness in expansion of cooperation between the two countries in whatever field possible.

Mahluji briefed the Armenian minister on the right methods to extract mines in Iran.

The two ministers reached general agreements on joint investments in industries and mines as well as activating some mines and industrial units in Armenia by the Iranian experts.

It was also agreed that some delegations of Iranian expert visit Armenia to survey possibilities for rendering services in the field of copper, aluminium and decorative stones to Armenia.

Italy's Crude Imports From Iran Rise by 4.4% in 1996

Tehran Times Service

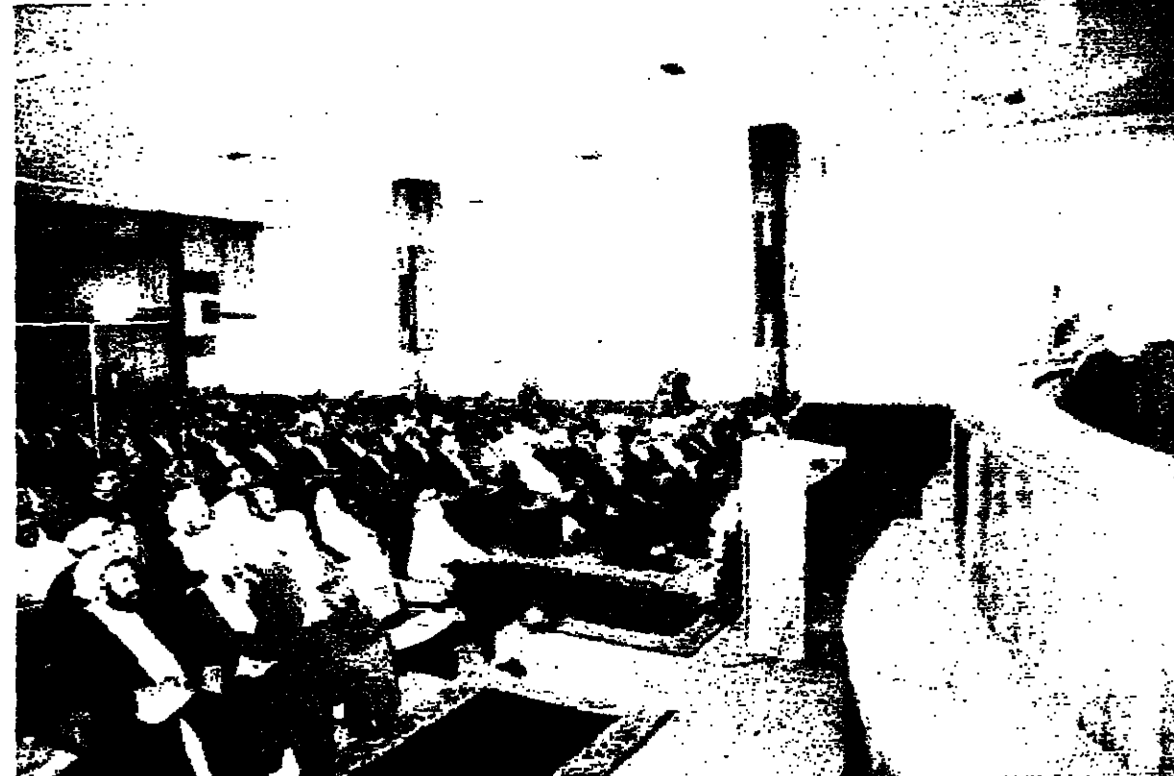
TEHRAN - Italy's crude oil imports from Iran reached 11.95 million tons during 1996, showing an increase of 4.4 percent compared to 1995, it was reported in Rome Tuesday.

The Italian Oil Union in its report added that due to increase in import of oil from Iran, Italy's oil imports from Saudi Arabia, Egypt, North Sea, the former Soviet Union republics and Venezuela fell in 1996 compared to the preceding year, IRNA reported.

Libya, Iran and Saudi Arabia were the major exporters of crude oil to Italy last year, the report added.

Libya supplied 31.1 percent, Iran 17.3 percent and Saudi Arabia 14.3 percent of Italy's oil needs over the period, the report concluded.

Speaker: Government Should Remove Housing Problem



Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN — Iran's Parliament Speaker, Ali Akbar Nateq Nouri, here yesterday urged the government officials, the parliment and the concerned organizations to remove housing problems.

Speaking at the inaugural ceremonies of a two-day meeting of the officials of the Islamic Revolution's Housing Foundation, he said that housing issue has become one of the main problems facing the society, particularly among young generation.

He added Late Imam Khomeini's decree on March 1979 for setting up of a housing foundation proves the deep understanding and attention of the Late Imam to the issue.

Elsewhere, he said that despite providing drinking water, electricity and other necessary facilities to rural areas, the rate of immigration to cities has increased singnificantly.

He said that low income and unemployment are the main factors of immigration to the cities and asked the officials to take appropriate measures in this regard.

Nateq Nouri said that Majlis has allocated a Rls.-200,000-billion budget for housing projcts in rural areas.

The speaker also called for construction of rural buildings according to international house making standards, to save people's lives against possible earthquakes.

Toyota Group Mulls Entry Into Power Supply Business

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN - Toyota Motor Corp. is considering starting a power generation and supply business together with its group companies, company officials said Wednesday.

Toyota and seven group companies plan to jointly build a power generation station to generate 100,000 kilowatts of power, initially for consumption by the group, the officials said. Denso corp. and Toyota Automatic Loom Works Ltd. are among them, an IRNA-Kyodo dispatch reported.

The Toyota group will consider selling electricity to other companies as well following a feasibility study, scheduled to begin in May, on power line construction and other aspects of the business, they said.

The Toyota Group, based in Aichi prefecture, central Japan, is supplied with around 2.3 million kw of power by Chubu Electric Power Co., a regional power utility company.

Toyota's power generation plan "would not lead to a major reduction in costs," a senior Toyota official said.

But "Japan's high-cost structure is largely attributable to the power and other regulated industries," the official said.

The plan is viewed as also having a symbolic meaning — to help pressure power companies to cut electricity charges, an industry analyst said.

Power generation has been opened to companies other than power utilities companies as a result of the 1995 revision of the electricity utility law.

First Vice President Receives Armenian Minister

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN - Iran's First Vice President Hassan Habibi told Industries Minister of the Republic of Armenia Ashout Safarian here Tuesday that the Islamic Republic would be willing to offer her experience in the area of economy, petrochemical engineering and technology to Armenia.

Habibi said historically Iran and Armenia had had excellent relations, and commented that closer relations between neighboring Iran and Armenia would help promote regional peace and stability, IRNA reported.

The first deputy president also observed that settlement of the issue of Karabakh would pave the way for greater collaboration between Iran and Armenia in the future.

The industries minister of Armenia, in response, expressed satisfaction over relations with Iran and added that the many agreements he had signed with the Iranian authorities in various areas during his visit to Tehran would obviously broaden his government's relations with the Islamic Republic.

Export From Gilan, Lorestan Increase

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN - The volume of exports of non-oil products to the Caspian Sea littoral states via Anzali Port, in the northern province of Gilan, reached 69,000 tons in the past Iranian year, ended March 20, 1997, it was announced here Wednesday.

Hassan Najafi, Director General of Gilan Ports and Shipping Organization, added that the figure shows an increase of 146 percent as compared to the preceding year, IRNA reported.

Over 2,274,000 tons of goods have also been unloaded in this port in the same period, indicating a rise of 70 percent compared to the previous year, he said.

Meanwhile, some 4,466 tons of various kinds of products, worth Rls. 14.8 billion, were exported from the western province of Lorestan over the same period, Alireza Soleymani, director general of provincial institute of standard and industrial research reported yesterday.

The figures showed an increase of 66.9 percent in value and 352.5 percent in weight, he added.

Iranian, Vietnamese Ministers Call For Boosting Trade Ties

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN — The visiting Vietnamese Minister of Agriculture, Negvin Kung Tan and Iran's Commerce Minister Yahya Al-e-Es'haq discussed expansion of the two countries trade relations here yesterday.

The Vietnamese minister who is here to chair the joint Economic Commission of the two countries referred to the vast potentials of cooperation between the two countries and told the Iranian minister that Iran and Vietnam can further boost the volume of their trade relations.

He told Al-e-Es'haq that Vietnam can further export rice, tea and other agricultural products to Iran and import Iranian gas, oil and petrochemical products.

Al-e-Es'haq told the Vietnamese minister that Iran has considerable potentials rendering technical and engineering service as well as exporting industrial products which can all be to the interest of Vietnam.

World Bank Prepared to Give Annual Credits to Russia

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN - The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) is prepared to give credits to Russia worth up to 3 billion dollars a year. Since the program of strategic support to a country, as a rule, is drawn for a term of three years, new credits might total nine billion roubles, IBRD President, Wolfensohn, told Itar-Tass prior to his departure from Washington to Moscow on another regular visit.

Wolfensohn pointed out that the itinerary of his visit beginning on April 10 had not been fully coordinated yet. However, the IBRD president said that he hoped to meet President Boris Yeltsin, hold a substantial dialog with Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin and first vice-presidents Anatoly Chubais, Boris Nemtsov and other members of the new cabinet.

In the past, Wolfensohn had worked with members of the new economic team of the Russian government and he highly esteems their professional qualities. Besides, Wolfensohn intends to meet a number of deputies of the State Duma.

The IBRD president said that during talks with Russian officials he intends to discuss a number of issues pertaining to the relationship between Moscow and the IBRD which is one of the biggest credit and financial organizations in the world. In particular, during the talks the sides intend to discuss the program of the implementation of the so-called first coal loan aimed at a structural restructuring of the coal industry in Russia and giving support to miners. Whether a second such loan will be granted will to a great extent depend on the results of this discussion.

Wolfensohn noted that he had not discussed with Nemtsov yet a possibility of IBRD participation in the forthcoming reform of a housing and public utilities sector in Russia, adding that he was quite prepared to discuss this problem. Wolfensohn also mentioned the so-called naval start project with the participation of Russia and Ukraine, describing this initiative as splendid.

The project envisages commercial launchings of space satellites from a floating platform in the Pacific Ocean, might be raised to a new stage. The IBRD might offer its own guarantees for this project and the IBRD intends to expand the scale of its guarantee transactions in Russia, the IBRD president said.

In general, Wolfensohn positively assessed the development of cooperation between IBRD and Moscow. Recently, the Russian portfolio of the bank which had never excelled in economic parameters has been quickly switching over to a category of the most successful.

So far, Russia has been granted 28 IBRD credits totally worth 6.4 billion dollars. In the last fiscal year Russia ranked third after China and India among IBRD major borrowers.

APEC Finance Ministers Agree on 7 New Initiatives

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN - Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) finance ministers, managed to implement two intiatives decided at their meeting in Kyoto last year and decided on seven new ones in Cebu City this year, including the hosting of a regional forum on securitization in Malaysia.

Malaysian Deputy Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim and U.S. Secretary of the Treasury Robert Rubin both described the annual meeting as successful, an IRNA-Bernama dispatch reported.

China's Finance Minister Liu Zhongli also said that China would support all those initiatives and that it would practise the one country, two systems policy when Hong Kong ceased to be a British colony on July 1 this year.

This meant that what one would find in Hong Kong right now would be basically unchanged after that date, he announced at the joint ministerial press conference to announce their joint ministerial statement.

The first initiative implemented was the launch of the computerized information network among APEC finance ministries which would facilitate information sharing among the economic and financial authorities in APEC member economies on overall economic developments in the region.

The launch would also facilitate the dissemination of macroeconomic and financial information to the public via bulletin boards on the Internet.

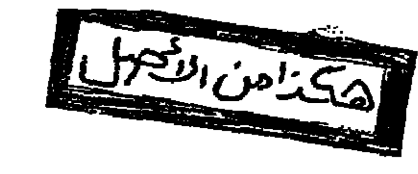
The second initiative implemented was the discussion of international business taxation, especially on emerging tax issues in a globalized economy, including the developments in emerging electronic payment systems, which permit transactions in cyberspace.

Of special interest was an Australian study on the joint APEC/organization for economic cooperation and development symposium on international business taxation.

The ministers said the rapid financial innovations could have tax implications that needed to be addressed and called on their tax authorities to work on these issues.

The other six initiatives decided at this year's meeting were the call for enhanced cooperation among export financing institutions, the strengthening of financial market supervision, the strengthening of clearing and settlement infrastructure, supporting the development of rating agencies and strengthening information disclosure standards, holding a regional forum of pension fund reforms and voluntary action for supporting the freer and stable flow of capital.

Philippine Finance Secretary Roberto de Ocampo, who also spoke at the joint press conference, said the ministers welcomed the Special Data Dissemination Standard (SDDS).



SPORTS SUMMARY

Tehran Times Service

FOOTBALL

Ganz Puts Inter Milan in Charge

MILAN, Italy: Inter Milan staked their claim to a place in the UEFA Cup final here Tuesday night when they beat 10-man Monaco 3-1 in the first-leg of their semifinal showdown at the San Riro.

Maurizio Ganz, who scored all three in their 3-2 victory over Anderlecht in the quarterfinals, was again Inter's hero — scoring another two and offering the third on a plate for Ivan Zamorano in the first half. Monaco had defender Gilles Grimandi sent off two minutes after the restart for throwing a punch in an off-the-ball incident, but substitute Victor Ikpeba still pulled one back for the French league leaders.

Nine-Man Tenerife Hang on

TENERIFE, Spain: Tenerife, reduced to nine men for the last quarter-of-an-hour after having two players sent off, held on to score a 1-nil victory over German opponents Schalke in their first-leg UEFA Cup semifinal here Tuesday. The Spanish first division side, who had gone clear through a Felipe penalty after just five minutes after Olaf Thon had brought down Juanele, had to soak up tremendous pressure. The first Tenerife player to be shown the red card by British referee David Elleray was midfield powerhouse Vivar Dorado who elbowed Latel in a desperate tackle eight minutes into the second half. Then goalkeeper Marcelo Ojeda, who had just produced two dazzling saves for the hard-pressed home side, was sent off for a foul on Belgian frontrunner Marc Wilmots.

To German dismay, De Kock missed the ensuing penalty — sending substitute goalkeeper Bengt Andersson the wrong way but hitting his shot wide of the left post.

AS Roma Sack Coach

ROME: AS Roma have sacked their Argentine Coach Carlos Bianchi and are set to bring back 74-year-old legend Nils Liedholm. The dismissal of Bianchi, who has only been in the job since last summer, follows a 2-1 defeat to Cagliari on Sunday which left Roma four points adrift of a place in next season's UEFA Cup.

Hope for Oldham While Fulham and Wigan Gain Promotion

LONDON: Oldham picked up a crucial point in their English first division battle against Relegation when they held visiting Birmingham to a 2-2 draw. And Fulham and Wigan ensured promotion from division three — Fulham forcing a 0-0 draw at Mansfield and Wigan beating visiting Colchester 1-0.

French Player Sentenced for Drugs Offense

NANCY, France: Jimmy Maillard, a defender with French first division club Nancy, was given a suspended eight month prison sentence here Tuesday for drug trafficking. The 26-year-old was being held on remand in connection with inquiries into an armed robbery which he is alleged to have carried out while he was suspended from football for smoking cannabis.

Ravanelli Puts Op on Hold

MIDDLESBROUGH, England: Italian striker Fabrizio Ravanelli has postponed an achilles tendon operation so that he can help Middlesbrough chase their cup double and premiership survival.

Ravanelli, who scored his 27th goal of the season in the League Cup final draw with Leicester last Sunday, is doubtful for the premiership match against Relegation rivals West Ham at Upton Park Wednesday night. But Boro manager Bryan Robson hopes his leading scorer will be fit for the FA Cup semifinal with Chesterfield at Old Trafford on Sunday.

TENNIS

Woodbridge Advances

HONG KONG: Australian doubles specialist Todd Woodbridge scored a 6-1, 6-4 first-round singles victory over Japan's Shuzo Matsuoka in the first round of the Hong Kong Open here on Tuesday.

Third-seeded Woodbridge, ranked 32 in the world, arrived in Hong Kong from Adelaide after helping Australia to a 5-0 whitewash over the Czech Republic in their Davis Cup quarterfinal tie. Also through to the second-round was fiery American Jeff Tarango, who came back from 1-4 down in the second set to beat Russian Andrei Cherkasov 3-6, 7-6 (7/4), 6-0. Top-seed Michael Chang, the crowd favorite, was leading Hong Kong's Melvin Tong 3-0 in the first set before rain called a halt to the night's play.

Wimbledon Finalists Safely Through

MADRAS, India: Wimbledon champion Richard Krajicek trounced Tomas Nydahl of Sweden 6-4, 6-4 to qualify for the second-round of the ATP event here Tuesday. But Malivai Washington, the man who lost to Krajicek in last year's Wimbledon final, flirted with disaster before defeating Bulgarian Orlin Stanoychev 7-5, 6-7 (6/8), 6-3.

Specialists Take Charge

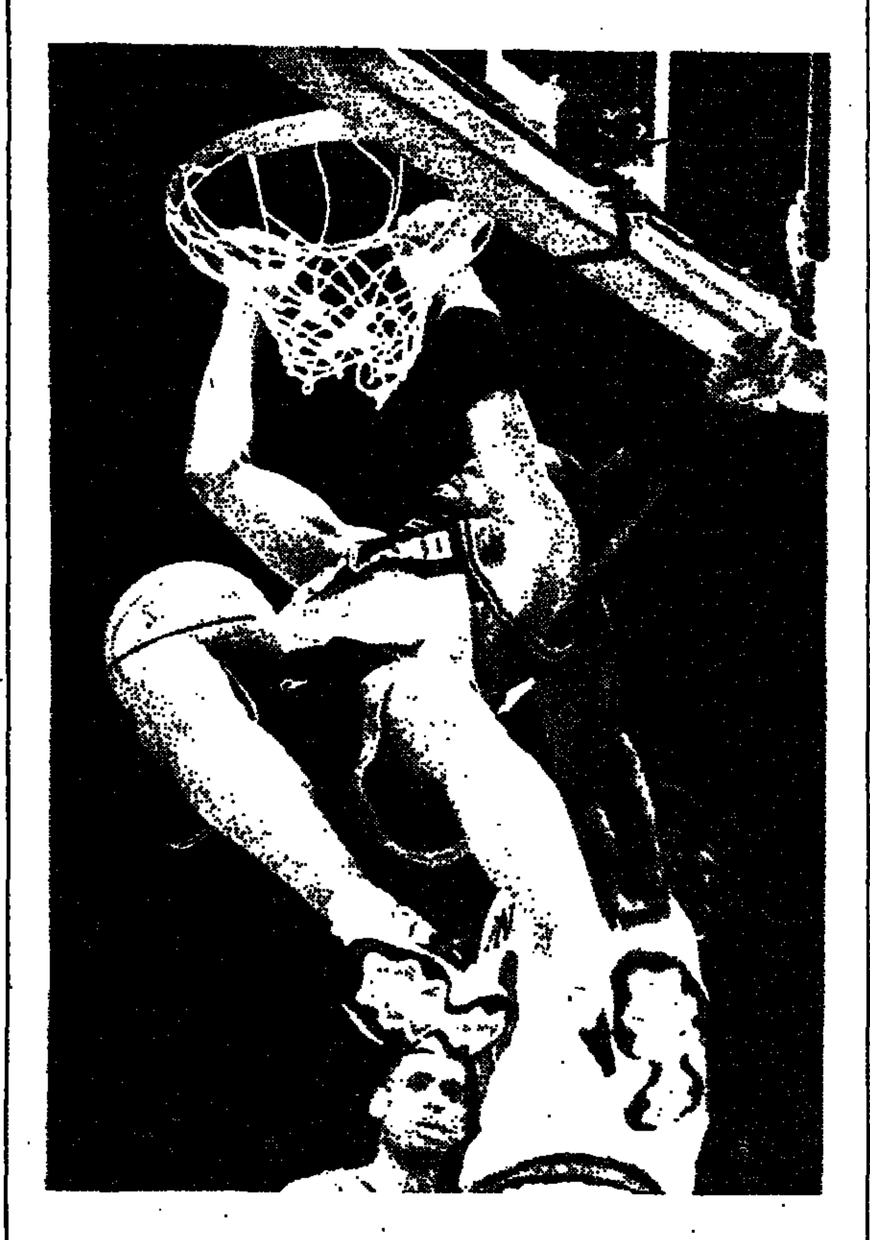
LISBON: Spain's clay-court specialists put last weekend's Davis Cup disappointments against Italy behind them and took charge at the ATP's 625,000-dollar Portuguese Open here on Tuesday. Second seed Carlos Moya, fifth-seeded Alberto Berasategui and eighth seed Javier Sanchez all scored wins. Moya beat compatriot Jacob Diaz, Berasateugui defeated fellow-Spaniard Carlos Costa and Sanchez saw off home player Bruno Fragoso.

Iran Ranked Second in Salonika Marathon

TEHRAN — The Iranian runner ranked second at marathon competitions held in Salonika, Greece.

Hossein Fazeli, participating in the contest at the age category of over 40 years old, ran the 42 km distance in two hours and 36 minutes and 50 seconds.

More than 2,400 runners from 19 different countries took part in the marathon competitions. (IRNA)



NEW YORK, NY, United States (April 8): Cleveland Cavaliers' Chris Mills (24) hangs on to the rim after dunking for two points over the New York Knicks' Patrick Ewing (R) at the end of the first quarter in Madison Square Garden.

(AFP PHOTO)

Tyson Fight on May 3 Postponed Due to Cut

LAS VEGAS — Mike Tyson has postponed his rematch with Evander Holyfield until June 28 after reopening a cut over his left eye that he first injured in sparring last month.

It was the second time Tyson had postponed a fight against Holyfield, and the third time since Tyson was released from prison that he has had to postpone a fight because of illness or injury.

The fight had been scheduled for May 3 at the MGM Grand Garden Arena, but promoter Don King postponed it Tuesday on the recommendation of the plastic surgeon who treated Tyson's cut.

"What can I do? These things happen," said Tyson, a mark clearly visible on the left corner of his eye.

"It will set me back in a way as far as my mindset goes," he said at a hastily called news conference Tuesday evening. "On the other hand, it's a blessing in disguise because it gives me time to clean up some other aspects in my life that have been going on."

Tyson declined to be specific, saying it was "nothing that needs to be aired in public at this time."

He denied rumors circulating from his training camp that he hadn't been preparing properly for the fight.

"I don't know where you received that information from. I'm in great shape, perhaps the best ever," he said.

"I'm prepared to fight at this moment," Tyson said, flanked by King, plastic surgeon Barry Markman and other members of his entourage. "I'm just following the instructions of the doctors."

Tyson said he first was cut in sparring in Florida on March 17 and the cut was reopened last Wednesday when he resumed sparring, requiring 10-12 stitches. Tyson worked out again Monday, and the cut began bleeding again.

It was not the same cut that Tyson sustained in the fifth round of his Nov. 9 fight with Holyfield, although it was in the same area, Markman said.

Tyson declined to name the sparring partner who originally caused the injury with a head butt during a session in which Tyson was wearing protective headgear.

"He'll take it too personal," Tyson said. "He took it really hard when it happened."

Speaking of his rematch with Holyfield, Tyson said he does not "waste time on any personal grudges. This is my job, the way I make my living."

"I never had any idea he could fight as well as he could," Tyson added. (AP)

Understanding Kung Fu as Described by a Master

By Ja'far Qasempour Jahangir

Skills of Kung Fu

(Part 34)



If you can use your legs skillfully, you won't be defeated easily. A kick with the shanks can stop your opponent's attack while a side kick can be crushing. You can also torture your rival with your strong and deadly kicks. You will fall behind if you are slow in kicking. Although preparation and attack together form a complete movement, they are in reality two separate movements.

You have to have the capability to stop your attack quickly if you face your opponent's counterattack. Meanwhile, you should pay much attention to your balance and leg's movements. The short and fast steps are controlled easier than the long and slow ones. You can often make an attack on your rival or do not let him perform his plan at the stage of preparation in particular in near challenges. To do so, you can spoil your rival's front blows or guard with some tricky techniques in order to defeat him. It also enables you to change the distance whenever you wish.

You may apply your prearranged attack only on a rival who always stands in a precise and right distance of you and consequently he is not easily vulnerable. In other words, he guarantees his security by keeping far from his rival. Hence, you have to take short steps backwards in order to drag him toward yourself and in this way have the opportunity to perform your techniques. Meanwhile, if you overuse the prearranged attacks, your opponent can read your mind and consequently he performs his hindering blows. So, you have to apply it sufficiently and accurately in order to omit or minimize your vulnerability. Also, you should open your guard to the extent needed for trapping the rival.



You can practice the preparatory blows while fighting, changing your direction and making tricky attacks on your opponent. A real attack requires enough speed and good timing. In addition, your mind should be alert as well as sharp and also your movements should be fascinating.

If your rival performs the first technique and takes the lead at the beginning of the challenge, the only way is to confuse him with consecutive counterattacks and make an attack on his guard.

Tactic means the capability of outstripping. Of course, it needs right evaluation, right recognition of opportunities, right anticipation of the rival's next movements as well as guts. Having physical capabilities is needed but does not guarantee by itself the victory. You have to have the ability to apply your technical potentialities through right assessment of the rival. A good challenger firstly fixes his distance with rhythmic movements of legs and then deals with tricky (short) blows and attacks on the opponent.



TEHRAN (April 9): Majlis Speaker Hojjatoleslam Ali Akbar Nateq Nouri awards the winner of the best film in the closing ceremony of the Youth Cinema Festival. *(Photo by K. Ahmadi)*

Netanyahu Rejects EU Proposal for "Code of Conduct" With Palestinians

BAIT-UL-MOQADDAS — Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu rejected European proposals for resolving the Mideast Peace crisis Wednesday as he prepared to leave on a European tour.

A spokesman for the right-wing Israeli leader said a proposal put forward by the 15-member European Union for Israelis and Palestinians to accept a "code of conduct" which would include a halt to both anti-Israeli violence and Jewish settlement growth was unacceptable.

Netanyahu was scheduled to leave later Wednesday for the Netherlands, which currently holds the rotating EU presidency. He will travel to Rome Friday for an Israel-Italy economic conference.

The EU's Mideast envoy, Miguel Angel Moratinos, on Tuesday proposed a "code of good conduct" for Israelis and Palestinians to encourage dialogue between them.

Palestinians accuse Israel of violating the peace process by building 6,500 new homes for Jews in disputed East Bait-ul-Moqaddas, a move which has triggered three weeks of deadly violence in the West Bank.

On Tuesday, Netanyahu said the EU should help create the right conditions for dialogue, notably by investing in the Palestinian self-rule areas — suggesting he would not welcome EU intervention in the political arena.

The EU is both the biggest donor to Arafat's Palestinian authority and Israel's biggest trading partner.

It is now seeking a greater role in the crisis-hit Middle East peace process, of which the United States, Israel's main ally, is the key sponsor.

During a meeting in Brussels Monday, EU member nations agreed proposals to put to the United States for a joint action to relaunch the peace process.

A summit meeting in Washington Monday between President Bill Clinton and Netanyahu failed to come up with ways to relaunch negotiations with the Palestinians. *(AFP)*

(Contd From Pg. 1)

SAUDI...

He refused to provide any details on the arrest in Canada of Saudi National Hani Abdel Rahim Sayegh, who was said to be the driver of the vehicle containing the explosives that heavily damaged the U.S. military facility in eastern Saudi Arabia.

Aziz also refused comment on statements by Canadian intelligence services that another Saudi, Ahmed Ibrahim Mughassil, was the mastermind behind the Khobar bombing.

"No information should be taken seriously if the Saudi source is not identified or if it is not released by the official Saudi News Agency," the interior minister said.

The *Washington post* reported Saturday that syrian authorities refused to help Saudi Arabia capture Mughassil, a member of the Islamic group, suspected by Saudi Arabia of planning further attacks.

A Saudi official called the report "erroneous." *(AFP)*

(Contd From Pg. 1)

INDIA...

Gujral confirmed the proposed next session between foreign secretaries of the two countries in Islamabad in the first week of May, ahead of a meeting between the prime ministers of the two rivals, he said.

The prime ministers are to meet in May during a summit of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) at Male in the Maldives.

Khan described the talks, the first between foreign ministers of the two countries since 1989, as an "ice-breaking meeting."

He said they agreed to release each other's detained fishing boats and crew as a "humanitarian" step to help promote goodwill.

The two governments would discuss the reciprocal releases of other civilian prisoners at a later date, Khan said.

Resumption of dialogue between the two countries, which have fought three wars since independence in 1947, began last month after more than three years with a meeting of the Pakistani and Indian foreign secretaries. *(AFP)*

(Contd From Pg. 1)

PRIMAKOV...

"I had authorization from President Boris Yeltsin to say that, if the document was ready, he might come to Paris to sign the document at the level of the leaders of Russia and the 16 member countries of NATO."

The Atlantic alliance and Russia are currently negotiating formulation of a joint document, ahead of the alliance's summit in Madrid on July 8 and 9, which will designate the Eastern European countries to be invited to join NATO.

The Russia-NATO accord is aimed at appeasing Russia's hostility to enlargement of NATO to former Warsaw Pact members. *(AFP)*

(Contd From Pg. 1)

TAJIKISTAN...

talks said, "We have come to Iran to work out the accords signed in principle."

He expressed hope that the national reconciliation commission would start functioning as envisaged in the former accords.

The Tajik foreign minister appreciated Iranian peace efforts and said the Tajik nation and government would never forget Iran's role in helping the republic get rid of the civil war.

Turjanzadeh, the representative of Tajik oppositions for his part said that there are two protocols to be discussed one of which is about repealing a verdict issued by the Tajik Supreme Court four years ago banning activities of opposition parties.

He said the opposition believes that the activities of political parties is impossible in Tajikistan because of the lack of freedom and that the representatives of the Tajik government are aware of the matter.

The second protocol on the agenda is about guaranteeing the implementation of the accords already signed by the two parties to the peace talks, Turjanzadeh said.

He complained that there are several agreements that have yet to be implemented including an agreement concerning the supporters of the opposition. He said, "the two parties had already agreed that none of the opposition's supporters should be sentenced to death, but, unfortunately, two of our brothers were recently put to gallows."

"The government's failure to abide by its promises has pressed us to seek guarantees from the United Nations and the observer nations including Iran, Pakistan, Russia and Uzbekistan for validity of the accords signed with Dushanbe government," Turjanzadeh stated.

Meanwhile, UN special envoy for Tajikistan Gerd Dietrich Merrem said in his inaugural speech, "peace is approaching in Tajikistan and we have mainly fulfilled our constructive promises."

He called on the observer nations to help bring about an appropriate atmosphere for implementation of the accords inked by the two parties.

The inter-Tajik peace talks will last 10 days in Tehran.

Iran, Russia, Pakistan and Uzbekistan are the observer countries during the peace talks.

(Contd From Pg. 1)

BHUTTO...

Pakistan's change of leadership under Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, Pakistan no longer interferes in Afghanistan's internal affairs.

"In my opinion, Taleban cannot claim to be the real representative of Islam (in Afghanistan)," he said, adding that "They (the Taleban) are definitely acting contrary to Islamic principles."

Referring to the new coalition forged between the Muslim League of Nawaz Sharif and the Tehreek-i-Jafria Movement, he said that Pakistan is on the road to recovery, citing improved foreign policies such as Pakistan's stand in the Kashmir issue.

"Kashmir is one of Pakistan's problems which will soon be solved under the new government's foreign policies," Javadi said.

Javadi denied suggestions that President Farooq Leghari has been brought under pressure to resign by his coalition party with Nawaz Sharif, saying such rumors have been fueled by the fact that President Leghari was supported by the Pakistan People's Party when he came into office.

On his party's coalition with the Pakistan Muslim League (PML), he said they have not been promised any facilities but that he hoped to take some.

He said he hoped the Shia situation in Pakistan would improve and lauded the Islamic Republic of Iran as a true representative of Islam.

(Contd From Pg. 1)

RELATIONS...

Tabarzadi said: "I have announced my readiness for this post, I am committed to function within the framework of the Constitution and resist pressure groups. Today rule of law is of vital importance and I am committed to enforce law in the country."

"The Councils Code which is one of the important provisions of the Constitution has been forgotten for nearly 18 years in the country. Some 40 articles of the constitution deal with the principles of civil rights, including economic and social issues, social security, health, freedom of political parties and pressure groups as well as political security which have all been ignored for many years.

Asked whether a non-clergy can run for the post, Tabarzadi said that today only a non-clergy should be elected as president. During the past 15 years, Iran has had clergy presidents.

On his future programs, Tabarzadi said that the problems which exist in political and economic fields have hindered political participation of a major part of the society, adding that the economic and political structure of the country should be reformed.

Tabarzadi said that today people are faced with poverty and economic problems, adding that he would present new economic programs which would guarantee an honorable life for people within the framework of the Constitution.

Tabarzadi mentioned that due to absence of good management and accurate control over expenditures, a great chunk of the budget allocated to the development of the country is wasted.

He added that parts of national wealth has been squandered by the monopolists. On the basis of the Article 42 of the Constitution the wealth embezzled by some of the officials should be returned to the public treasury.

"If I win the presidential elections I will appoint Mohammad Khatami as the minister of Islamic guidance and culture and Ali Akbar Nateq Nouri as one of my cabinet ministers.

Asked who will be the interior minister in his cabinet, Tabarzadi said: "Currently I'm preparing the list of my cabinet ministers. Certainly someone else will hold the position in my cabinet. In my opinion we should stand firm against those who commit mistakes and violate the Constitution.

On his assessment of his chance to win the elections, he said, I have a considerable base among the intelligentsia, students and the learned. Most of the universities and academic centers welcome my candidacy.

He was asked if he could defend Iran's national interests at international arena, he said, what is important for a powerful government at international arena is safeguarding the country's national interests. All my campaigns till now have been directed towards this end.

Criticizing the performance of the Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting (IRIB), he said, the IRIB should provide all the candidates with equal opportunities to address the people. An open society needs cultural growth and political development. At present our dynamic art has been reduced to a useless one because certain limitations, he concluded.?

(Contd From Pg. 1)

NEW...

Clashes erupted after the funeral of Nader Isseid, 24, one of two Palestinians killed in Tuesday's fierce rioting in Al-Khalil, which broke out after two Jewish seminary students shot and killed a Palestinian in the divided city.

"The Olive Branch Is Down and the Kalashnikov Is Raised," the marchers shouted at his funeral.

"The Battle Has Started," said 24-year-old Yussef Dandif, raising his fist in the air.

Palestinian police fired 21 shots into the air as Isseid's body, wrapped in the red, white, green and black Palestinian flag, was lowered into the grave.

Afterward, thousands of Palestinian marchers, many waving black and green flags with slogans, marched toward the Israeli-controlled part of the city, where 500 Jewish settlers live.

Israeli troops fired rubber bullets to keep the crowd at bay, and stone-throwing quickly broke out. Palestinian police tried to calm the protesters, forming human chains and blocking the street with trucks to keep them away from the Israeli soldiers. Officers climbed on rooftops to stop youths from hurling down rocks.

The clashes spread briefly to the village of Dura outside Al-Khalil, but ended by early afternoon. Although intense, the rioting so far has not moved to the rest of the West Bank.

Palestinians said the Jewish students opened fire Tuesday without provocation, killing Assam Rashid Arafeh, 23.

The two students were released wednesday on 20,000 Shekels (about $6,000) bail and ordered to stay out of Al-Khalil for the next 60 days.

The incident was the second involving Jewish settlers this week. *(AP)*

(Contd From Pg. 1)

VELAYATI...

Asked by a reporter of German news agency about the possibility of the court being attacked by supporters of Iran or a threat being posed to the lives of German citizens in Iran, Velayati said, "these are all allegations based on illusion."

"Iran has shown in the past that it honors the expediency and dignity of the Islamic Republic of Iran even when a hostile action is taken against it," he said.

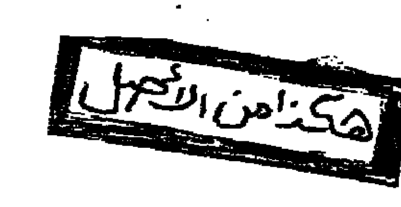
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NEW INSIGHT

which make blood cells. But now Dr. Darwin Prockop at Allegheny and his colleagues report that they are exploring how to use these marrow stromal cells, which are the precursors of bone and connective tissue cells.

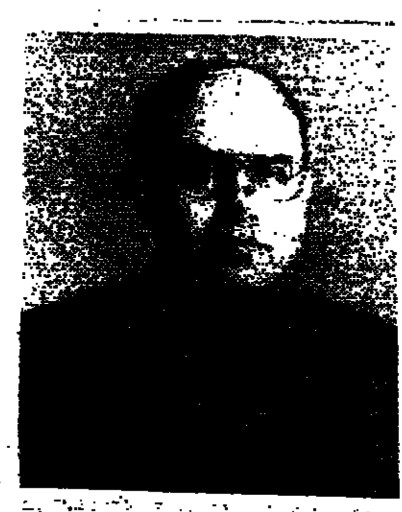
The goal is to develop ways of treating diseases ranging from osteoporosis, which afflicts the old, and brittle bone disease that afflicts the young.

One approach would be to replace flawed cells with healthy ones that could produce normal bone and tissue. Another approach could be to remove some of those cells from a patient, genetically re-engineer them to treat a flaw that causes diseases, and then implant them back into the patient. *(Reuter)*



Pakistan President Says Not Upset by Losing Powers

ISLAMABAD — Pakistani President Farooq Leghari said he was not upset by Parliament's constitutional amendment last week that clipped his powers to sack governments and appoint armed forces chiefs.



He told reporters he had opposed delegation of the powers to the presidency by the late military ruler General Mohammad Zia-ul-Haq but had used them to sack then-Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto in November because it was in the national interest.

I do not understand why people started thinking that I would be upset with it, Leghari said in his first public comments on the April 1 parliamentary amendment, which was initiated by Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif.

When did I express my anger? he asked.

The clauses Parliament repealed from the controversial eighth amendment, which Zia had inserted, were used by three presidents to sack four prime ministers in the last eight years.

In my whole political life, I have struggled for the supremacy of the constitution and even went to prisons so that the constitution can be restored (to its original form), Leghari said after opening an International Conference on Human Development in south Asia.

When I became the president (in 1993), I repeatedly said that the eighth amendment should be corrected and the constitution should be restored, he added.

But he said he had also said twice after becoming president that he would not hesitate to use those powers to dismiss a government if compelled.

So, when the conditions reached a stage that the country was at the verge of collapse, economic collapse was imminent and constitutional violations were taking place, I did what was only possible through the eighth amendment.

He said he did it with a heavy heart but in the interest of the country, and did it when it was inevitable.

Leghari said after dismissing Bhutto's government he held free and fair elections that brought Sharif's Pakistan Muslim League Party to power with a two-thirds parliamentary majority.

They had the power to change the eight amendment and they did change it, he said.

Zia, who introduced the eighth amendment as part of a bargain to end martial law, used it to sack his own hand-picked Prime Minister, Mohammad Khan Junejo, in May 1988 before being killed in a mysterious plane crash in August the same year.

Bhutto was fired first by President Ishaq Khan in 1990 and then by Leghari last November. Sharif was sacked by Ishaq Khan in 1993.

(Reuter)



ATHENS, Greece (April 2): Greek President Costis Stephanopoulos (R) talks to Albanian Prime Minister Bashkim Fino during their meeting in the president's office. Fino paied a two-day visit to Greece.

(AFP PHOTO)

Atlanta Bombings May Be Tied to Waco Siege

WASHINGTON — Bombings at an Atlanta abortion clinic may be connected to the 1993 siege of the branch Davidian complex in Texas that killed more than 80 people, the *Dallas Morning News* reported in Saturday's editions.

The paper said a letter claiming responsibility for the Atlanta bombings "makes a reference" to the 1993 siege and has federal officials nervous about the upcoming April 19 anniversary of the Waco deaths.

Officials described the clinic and club attacks as "hate crimes," the *Morning News* said, making them also worried about the "Freaknik" event scheduled in Atlanta on the Waco anniversary. That event is an annual gathering of black college students.

Anti-government activists have dubbed April 19 "Militia Day." That date is also the second anniversary of the Oklahoma City bombing.

Law enforcement officials told the *Morning News* that the letter's reference to Waco is not explicit.

They added that the author of the letter, claiming to represent "the army of God," did not take responsibility for the July 27, 1996, bombing in Atlanta's Olympic Centennial Park.

(AFP)

Most Indians Feel Congress' Role in Political Crisis Unjustified

NEW DELHI — Most Indians think the Congress (I) Party was unjustified in withdrawing support to the ruling coalition government and fomenting a political crisis, an opinion poll said.

The poll, published in the *Outlook* Weekly newsmagazine, showed that 67 percent of the 1,200 people interviewed across six cities felt the Congress had no right to stake claim to power.

Fifty-seven percent said Congress President Sitaram Kesri did the "wrong thing" by challenging the United Front government. Only 35 percent supported him.

An overwhelming 73% felt the Congress, which has just 140 seats in the 545-seat Lower House of Parliament and has been dogged by corruption scandals, could not form a credible government.

Forty-eight percent said Kesri, a former party treasurer who forced former Prime Minister P. V. Narasimha Rao to quit the party leadership, had withdrawn support to strengthen his position within the party.

The crisis began on March 30 when the Congress, which has kept the United Front alliance in power since June 1996, said it wanted to form its own coalition.

Its appeals to the front's dozen centrists, leftist and regional parties, to re-align behind it, however, have failed, leaving neither side in the position to command a parliamentary majority.

The third force in the Indian Lower House, the Hindu nationalists, who are accused by both Congress and United Front of mixing religion with politics, are also unable to form a government on their own, compounding the deadlock.

Thirty-seven percent said the country should have mid-term polls to resolve the impasse but 58 percent were against it.

Twenty-seven percent said former Finance Minister Manmohan Singh, the architect of India's 1991 economic reforms, would be the best choice as Congress prime minister. Kesri came second with 21 percent supporting him.

(AFP)

Hong Kong Defies Pessimism About Handover to China

HONG KONG — Back in 1983, as Britain squabbled with China over the return of Hong Kong, skeptics predicted disaster.

Fear of life under communist rule caused a financial panic. The stock market plunged. Professionals emigrated by the thousands to Britain, Canada and Australia. The government had to tie Hong Kong's currency to the U.S. dollar to stop its steep decline.

Pessimists felt their worst fears were confirmed in 1989 when Chinese troops crushed the democracy movement at Tiananmen Square in Beijing.

Now, less than three months before Britain gives up its biggest remaining colony, Hong Kong has more than defied those gloomy scenarios, staging a stunning turnaround that makes it a dominant force in the fastest growing part of the world economy.

Trade and foreign investment are at record highs. Hong Kong harbor is jammed with freighters and cruise liners. The real estate and stock markets are soaring. Polls find confidence rising among investors and the 6.3 million people of Hong Kong.

Manufacturing has been driven out by rising costs over the past 10 years, but Hong Kong is thriving on finance, banking, professional services and trade with China.

"Hong Kong is going from strength to strength. It's more dominant in every area than it was five years ago, or 10 years ago," said William J. Overholt, managing director of the Hong Kong office of bankers Trust Co. and author of "The Rise of China."

"An optimist would say that Hong Kong's role a decade from now will be what London's was in the early part of the century, or what New York's was in the two decades after World War II - it's where the action is," Overholt said.

The only dark cloud is the danger that stock and real estate prices, driven upward by an end-of-empire frenzy of speculation, could collapse at the first sign of an economic downturn.

But closer ties with China could cushion Hong Kong against a Japanese-style "bubble economy" crash, said Thomas Chan, director of the China Business Center at Hong Kong Polytechnic University.

"The takeover gives Hong Kong a golden opportunity to integrate into China and lay the foundation for long-term prosperity," he said.

Hong Kong has repeatedly proven its ability to cope with setbacks.

Devastated by the loss of China trade after the communist revolution of 1949, the colony quickly moved into making wigs, clothing, toys. Then came electronics.

In the late 1970s, when China started opening up to foreign investment, Hong Kong factories moved there for the cheap labor, and the transformation to a finance and services economy began.

Such flexibility has offered the chance of riches to people like Wong Kwan.

Wong arrived as a penniless immigrant 30 years ago, working in hotel kitchens until he saved Hong Kong dlrs 156,0000 ($20,000) to start his own company. Today, at 48, he is chairman of pearl oriental holdings, a 13.3-billion-Hong Kong dollar ($1.7 billion) real estate developer with plans to build five hotels a year in Asia.

More recently, the colony has profited from unexpectedly strong Chinese growth after Beijing confounded observers by crushing double-digit inflation in the early 1990s without plunging the country into recession.

This year, the government says the economy should grow by 5.5 percent.

Incongruously, it was a former communist guerrilla, Deng Xiaoping, who led Hong Kong's resurgence by restoring faith in its future as a capitalist haven after 150 years of British rule ends at midnight June 30.

Under the slogan "one country, two systems," the Chinese leader promised in 1984 to keep Hong Kong capitalist and highly autonomous for at least 50 years.

Hong Kong has been promised its own courts, laws and currency, insulated from the communist giant by the same border that exists today.

China has promised in writing to protect Hong Kong's 484 billion Hong Kong dollars ($62 billion) in foreign reserves from being plundered by mainland officials.

Also to stay is the respected, uncorrupt civil service, a key element in creating the world's eighth-largest trading economy, where average incomes are higher than Britain's.

Yet because some of China's commitments are still to be pinned down in detail, uncertainties loom.

Besides fears of Chinese corruption seeping in, one of the most worrisome points is the "rule of law" - the ability of Hong Kong courts to resist pressure to favor Chinese officials and companies.

"It is something on which we will only be able to reassure people when they see the transition and see how it works," said Jeff Muir, an executive of Seagram Asia-Pacific and vice chairman of the American Chamber of Commerce in Hong Kong.

Other uncertainties include news media freedoms and the status of tens of thousands of Hong Kong natives with foreign passports.

(AP)

Poor, Single Mother Trades Her Baby for Food

SANTIAGO DEL ESTERO, Argentina — A 27-year-old single mother of three traded her week-old baby girl to a brothel operator for a box of food, police said Wednesday.

Mirta Argentina Farias, faced with serious financial woes, swapped the infant for a crate containing powdered milk, sugar, flour and oil, in this city 1,200 kilometers (745 miles) northwest of Buenos Aires.

Police said a taxi driver who picked the mother up as she was leaving Fernandez Hospital acted as a middleman. (AFP)

Chinese Mother Gives Birth to Bumper Baby

BEIJING — A Chinese mother in central Henan Province has given birth to a bumper baby who was the same size as an 18-month-old toddler.

The huge baby, weighing nine kilograms and measuring 78 centimeters long was born by caesarian section on March 31.

"He was as big as an 18-month-old infant, but there was nothing abnormal about him," said doctor Li Xiao.

"However, he does eat a lot. His mother doesn't have enough milk for him," Li added.

The mother, Li Mao, said she ate nothing special during the pregnancy, although she was always very hungry. (AFP)

Rebels Enter Lubumbashi as Mobutu Appoints New Premier



PRETORIA, South Africa (April 8): Zairean government Foreign Minister Kamanda wa Kamanda (2nd L) shakes hands with Zairean rebel envoy Bizimana Karaha (2nd R) after four days of talks in Johannesburg, where both warring parties agreed on the need for a ceasefire to end the six-month-long civil war and negotiations to bring about a peaceful political solution to the conflict.

(AFP PHOTO)

KINSHASA — Zairean rebels fought their way into the country's second largest city, Lubumbashi, Wednesday as President Mobutu Sese Seko sought to regain control of the political chaos in Kinshasa by naming a military chief as new premier.

Residents cheered as the rebels, who have already seized more than one third of Zaire, moved into a southern district of Lubumbashi, capital of the mineral-rich Shaba Province.

The guerrillas clashed with government troops for control of the Lubumbashi headquarters of the elite presidential security division of the army, as army troops put up unexpected resistance.

Earlier, an AFP reporter saw rebels and government troops trade heavy and light arms fire a few kilometers (miles) outside the city to the north, though some army soldiers stole cars in the city center to try and flee the attack.

Other witnesses said they had seen the provincial governor driving round with a white flag in his hand, in a sign that the rebels are poised to notch yet another success in their six-month sweep westward.

Kinshasa, though far removed from the fighting, has not been spared the chaos, and on Wednesday Mobutu named a new prime minister, former Defense Minister General Likulia Bolongo, to replace Etienne Tshisekedi.

Tshisekedi, a long-time opposition leader, was arrested by security forces on Wednesday as he tried to enter the premier's office to begin running his new government, state-run television said.

Some 1,000 supporters who had rallied outside the prime minister's house to accompany him to his offices in a planned mass march were charged by soldiers, who used teargas to break up the crowds.

Tshisekedi, who has angered both opposition parties and pro-Mobutu groups by declaring Mobutu's regime illegitimate since his appointment just a week ago, was later released. (AFP)

Indian Coalition in 48-Hour Race for Survival

NEW DELHI — India's tottering coalition, facing almost certain defeat in a parliamentary vote of confidence on Friday, made a last-ditch bid for survival by launching peace talks with an estranged ally here Wednesday.

The United Front minority coalition offer was accepted by the Congress (I) Party, which is threatening to overthrow the government and try to form its own administration.

The negotiations, which began late Wednesday, come after 11 days of bickering between the two sides after Congress withdrew its parliamentary support, accusing the Front of mismanaging the economy and failing to unite the country.

A five-member Front team began talks in New Delhi with four senio. Congress leaders at the residence of the Chief Minister of Jammu and Kashmir, Farooq Abdullah, a Front spokesman said.

The United Front made the peace talks proposal Wednesday after a meeting of top leaders at Prime Minister H.D. Deve Gowda's house.

The Congress, which is demanding Deve Gowda's resignation and which wants to form its own coalition, accepted the talks offer after an emergency meeting of the party think-tank, the Congress working committee.

Deve Gowda hoped the talks would lead to "some positive solution".

But he ruled out stepping down, saying: "The United Front has already decided that there will be no change in leadership. This issue is not negotiable."

Harkishen Singh Surjeet, a veteran communist chosen to head the Front's negotiating team, was upbeat about the chances of a deal.

"Nobody wants elections and both sides are aware of the threat posed by the Hindu Nationalists taking power," he said. "The sides will have to come to an agreement." (AFP)

Italian Government Set to Survive Crisis Vote

ROME — Italy's government was set to survive Wednesday a parliamentary vote over its plans to send troops to Albania, after agreeing to a compromise with opposition parties, opposition spokesman Beppe Pisanu said.

The breakthrough came after last-ditch talks between officials of the Center-Left government and the rightwing opposition, hauling the 11-month-old government back from the brink of certain defeat.

Prime Minister Romano Prodi told Parliament as the debate on the issue opened that if his government lost Wednesday evening's vote he would put its future in the hands of President Oscar Luigi Scalfaro.

Prodi had held crisis talks with Scalfaro shortly before.

Pisanu, parliamentary leader of Forza Italia, one of a bloc of rightwing parties in the freedom alliance group of former Premier Silvio Berlusconi, said an amended, compromise motion would be put to Parliament [illegible] Wednesday.

Under the deal, the government and opposition will table a joint motion which notes the UN mandate of March 28 authorizing the sending of an international force to protect relief convoys to Albania, and calls on the government to "immediately implement" it.

The motion, signed by the leaders of the two main Center-Left and Center-Right blocks in Parliament is virtually guaranteed to succeed, as together the two groups have 80 percent of seats in the chamber of deputies. (AFP)

Bomb Destroys Store Injuring 24

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan — A powerful bomb exploded in central Punjab [illegible] Wednesday wounding 24 people, the state run news agency said.

The bomb blew up a shoe store in the heart of a congested shopping district in Gujranwala, about 220 kilometers (130 miles) southeast of Islamabad.

Most of the injured were inside the shoe store. Several of the victims are in critical condition, including five women and a child, the Associated Press of Pakistan reported.

No one took responsibility for the explosion but the eastern Punjab Province has been wracked by bitter sectarian violence in recent months. (AP)

Sri Lankan Navy Pounds Tiger Coastal Bases

COLOMBO — A flotilla of navy gunboats launched a surprise pre-dawn attack against a coastal base of Tamil Tiger guerrillas in northeastern Sri Lanka Wednesday, defense officials here said.

Eight Israeli-built Dvora gunboats and two fast attack craft shelled the coastal area of Chalai where the separatist Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) maintain their naval unit known as sea Tigers, officials said.

"It was a surprise attack and we believe that there were heavy losses on the terrorists and they also lost a lot of their facilities," a defense official here said.

He said at least 40 rebel boats were seen beached at the time of the attack and many of them were believed to have been damaged.

Officials said the attack, which lasted more than two hours, was coordinated by a command ship known as the Prakramabahu. There were no casualties among security forces in the long-range naval attack. (AFP)

Wave of Prison Riots Continues in Colombia

BOGOTA — Another Colombian prison fell under the control of rebellious inmates on Tuesday — the fourth since a wave of protests over poor living conditions and overcrowding erupted with the killing of four guards last week.

Police and penal authorities said the latest riot occurred in a penitentiary known as La Union in southwest Narino Province where a group of more than 50 inmates was holding three guards hostage, demanding better treatment and the appointment of a new warden.

Some inmates hurled rocks and other debris at police and soldiers who cordoned off the facility after the riot erupted early on Tuesday, but there were no reports of serious violence or injuries, police said.

The situation was more volatile in Bucaramanga, capital of northern Santander Province, where clashes erupted on Tuesday afternoon between inmates at the Modelo Prison and police and soliders surrounding it since a riot started there on Monday. (Reuter)

UK's Hamilton Confirmed by Conservative Party

KNUTSFORD, England — Neil Hamilton, a former Conservative minister accused of taking cash for asking parliamentary questions, was confirmed by local members of the party on Tuesday as their candidate for Britain's May 1 election.

Local Conservative Party tresurer Tony Martin said Hamilton was adopted by a vote of 182-100 by party members in a meeting at the 500-year-old Dixon arms pub.

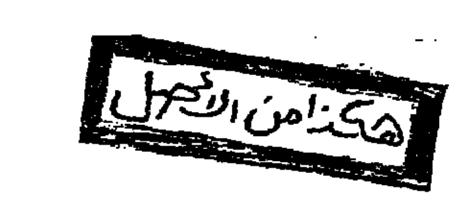
One hundred and eighty-two people voted to select him as candidate. One hundred did not vote to select him, he told reporters waiting outside the meeting.

Despite pressure from senior Conservative Party officials Hamilton has refused to stand down. He has consistently denied the allegations in the influence-peddling scandal that has hurt the ruling conservatives who are 20 points behind Labour in national opinion polls. (Reuter)



ANKARA, Turkey (April 8): Turkish Prime Minister Necmettin Erbakan (2nd R) and Foreign Minister Tansu Ciller (3rd R) along with members of the Turkish government watch the flag-drapped coffin of Turkish ultranationalist leader Alpaslan Turkes being carried pass during the funeral ceremony in Ankara this Tuesday. Turkish officials and hundreds of thousands of supporters of the late "Grey Wolves" leader, who died last week of a heart attack at the age of 80 years, attended the ceremony. Other members of government in picture are not identified.

(AFP PHOTO)



Dollar Rises Again, European Shares Pause

LONDON — The dollar extended its recent advance in European morning business on Tuesday, while key stock markets paused for breath after a buoyant start to the week.

The U.S. currency touched a 56-month peak above 126 yen and five-week highs just short of 1.72 marks, although it later edged back from these levels.

There is no real indication that dollar/yen is suffering from fatigue, either in terms of direction or in the extent of its move, said Paul Meggyesi, senior currency analyst at Deutsche Morgan Grenfell.

The British pound traded at 4-1/2 year highs, above its old floor of 2.778 marks in the European



exchange rate mechanism, from which it baled out in September 1992, before edging back a little below overnight levels.

Prospects for higher U.S. interest rates and the start of Japan's new fiscal year, when new investment decisions are made, are helping to boost the dollar against the yen.

Increasing odds in favor of a single euro currency being launched on time have also helped to depress the mark at the expense of the dollar, analysts said.

They were wary of possible official moves to curb the dollar's gains, which total around two percent this month, although official views in Japan seemed mixed.

Finance Minister Hiroshi Mitsuzuka said Japan would deal appropriately with excessive currency movements and Eisuke Sakakibara, director-general of the Finance Ministry's international finance bureau, said the authorities would be ready to intervene if necessary.

But Japan's Vice Trade Minister Tsutomu Makino was quoted as saying the weak yen was more positive than negative for the country's economy at the moment.

We have had some jaw-boning from Japanese policy makers already and that is likely to intensify. If it does, dollar/yen is unlikely to rise sharply, said Meggyesi.

The Bank of Japan seems to be more relaxed about the strength of the dollar and intervention — verbal or otherwise — is not likely until the 128/29-yen level, said a senior trader at a Belgian bank.

Whatever the perceptions in Tokyo, another trader added: The next focus is what the U.S. automanufacturers will say as they feel the pinch of the strong dollar.

Meanwhile, European bourses largely consolidated after Wall Street's second successive day recovering from fears of higher interest rates helped them to revive on Monday.

U.S. shares quoted in London were higher on balance on Tuesday morning after the Dow Jones industrial average rose 0.46% overnight but traders remained cautious.

The Dow should have a firm open and remain firm at least for the first hour, one London market maker said. But what we're seeing at the moment on Wall Street is just a technical bounce. I can't see it lasting.

The London Stock Market, Europe's biggest, was barely changed overall, while the Paris bourse added a third of a percentage point.

London share dealers said the potential for more share price gains in London was limited as concern over interest rates, the strength of the pound and the British election on May 1 had sent buyers to the sidelines.

There's no business around, one senior dealer complained.

Institutions in Britain don't want to get involved until after the election.

German shares were unable to hold the levels reached after the market moved strongly higher in late Monday trading, with no real impetus for further progress despite the strength of the dollar, Frankfurt traders said.

But French shares rose on the dollar's strength and Wall Street's rise, although Paris traders said solid volume would be needed to maintain gains.

Japanese stocks firmed around 1.7% as the dollar's gains were expected to improve prospects for exporting companies.

Markets generally were looking ahead to Friday, when U.S. producer prices and retail sales data will give further clues on the timing of the next expected rise in the U.S. interest rates.

Moody's Downgrade Foreign Currency Ceilings for Thai Bonds

BANGKOK — Moody's investors services Wednesday said it was downgrading foreign currency ceilings for Thai bonds and bank deposits, meaning that all ratings for bonds issued by Thailand have been lowered.

Thailand's foreign currency ceilings for bonds and bank deposits have been lowered from A2 to A3, the rating agency said in a statement.

Moody's said the downgrade reflected "an incremental deterioration in the country's creditworthiness."

"As a result, all bonds of the kingdom of Thailand have been downgraded from A2 to A3," it added.

Bonds with an a rating are seen as favorable obligations with an upper-medium grade but with elements suggesting "a susceptibility to impairment sometime in the future." Ratings of AA or AAA are more favorable than A.

Moody's cited a build up of foreign currency obligations which have added to the country's external debt problems facing the manufacturing industry and the recent crisis which hit the financial and property sectors.

The agency also said it doubted the effectiveness and ability to implement macroecomonic measures by the Thai government.

It said, however, the rating takes into account the country's "strong underlying fundamentals" such as liberal trade and investment, favorable location and strong economic growth.

Moody's said it also downgraded to a3 from A2 the long-term senior debt and deposit ratings of Bangkok Bank, Export-Import Bank of Thailand, Industrial Finance Corp. of Thailand, Siam Commercial Bank and Thai Farmers' Bank.

It said the downgrade "reflected the lowering of the foreign currency debt ceilings for debt and bank deposits of Thailand announced earlier."

Moody's said the country's principal challenge "is its sizable call on foreign savings, as reflected in its large current account deficit."

The government last month announced spending cuts of 106 billion baht ($4.1 billion) in order to narrow the deficit, which is expected to fall this year to 7.9% of gross domestic product from 8.2% in 1996.

Moody's said the government's efforts to contract domestic demand and bolster domestic savings through fiscal tightening could help address a chronic gap between savings and investment in Thailand.

But it noted sustaining the savings level would be all the more challenging given corporate savings were eroding due to competitiveness problems and declining profits.

Moody's also said it was too early to determine the magnitude of problems facing the financial sector, although they were likely to be protracted.

Another credit rating agency, Standard and Poor's, warned Friday that a slump in Thailand's financial sector was likely to be "more significant and prolonged" than predicted by the government.

Many of Thailand's finance companies and banks have been saddled with massive amounts of bad loans linked to the slumping property sector.

Analysts from the agency said non-performing debts could be as high as 15% of total loans held in Commercial Banks' portfolios.

At the Bangkok bourse, dealers said sentiment was affected only slightly by Moody's announcement, citing the recent standard and poor's review of the Thai finance sector as a factor to offset any further negative announcements.

At 10:55 a.m. the stock exchange of Thailand index was down 2.83 points at 712.53 points. (AFP)

Netanyahu Policies Scaring Foreign Investors Away From Israel

TEL AVIV — The Arab-Israeli peace process crisis is frightening off foreign investors, contributing to the economic slowdown that has hit Israel since Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu took office in June.

"The multinationals which moved here in recent years have tended to freeze their development programs, while those which were contemplating the move have held off," said Tel Aviv Business Attorney Eytan Liraz, who represents European and U.S. banks and other companies.

An international relations official at Bank Hapoalim, Israel's largest bank, who asked not to be identified, said, "Israel is no longer viewed as an ideal base for multinationals' activities in the Middle East."

"Foreign investors fear political instability more than anything else. They don't know where the region is going anymore, while with the previous government, peace was in sight," he added.

Israel is seen as a country "which is becoming dangerous again" and is losing its "emerging market" image with international investment funds, the official said.

Since it concluded the autonomy agreements with the Palestinians in 1993, Israel had been receiving peace dividends in the form of a lifting of the Arab boycott and better financial risk ratings from evaluators Moody's and Standard and Poor's.

Liraz furnished as an example of the investors' cooling enthusiasm a major U.S. confection company which gave up plans to establish itself in Israel.

The company "thought that it could export from Israel to Jordan and the Persian Gulf countries. But with the current tension, the plan no longer seems realistic," he said.

Yaacov Frenkel, the governor of the Bank of Israel, the nation's central bank, said that "the uncertainty about the peace process has resulted in a decline in investment."

The facts run contrary to the dreams of Netanyahu, who continues to predict that Israel will become "a major world economic power" and will enjoy by the beginning of the next century a gross national product (GNP) higher than Britain's.

In recent years foreign investments have been the locomotive driving the country's growth. Within three years, they more than tripled, reaching a record $2.7 billion in 1996.

The influx of capital represents two (percentage) points of GNP growth per year," the Hapoalim official estimated. Since the end of 1996, economic activity has been dropping.

According to an industry association poll, 44% of the companies have recorded declines in exports, the highest percentage to give such a response since 1989.

A third of the companies' leaders expected layoffs. The unemployment rate, which fell from 10% of the workforce in 1993 to 6.7% this year, may climb again in the coming months.

The Bank of Israel expects GNP growth of 4% this year, compared to an annual average of 6% in real terms since the beginning of the 1990s.

However, there was one positive point. Foreigners remain interested in small high-tech Israeli companies in the information and electronics industries.

"The products developed in these sectors are less sensitive to political circumstances in the Middle East because they are above all destined for the U.S., European and Asian markets," the Hapoalim official said. (AFP)

WTO Director-General to Visit China to Back its WTO Membership

HONG KONG — Renato Ruggiero, director-general of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) is to make an unprecedented visit to Beijing next week in a bid to keep alive China's 10-year negotiations to enter the trade body, it was reported Wednesday.

Ruggiero told the south China Morning Post in an interview in Geneva that he would make the trip to China next week because he wanted to make this year "a crucial year for the negotiations."

In the first visit of its kind by a WTO director-general to an acceding country, Ruggiero said China's negotiations were at last approaching their "final stage" and that the last multilateral working party on China's entry, held in March, had been hailed as a success by all sides.

"The picture, as usual, in the last part of the negotiations, is that we face tough negotiations, and so we need a stronger political will, in order to settle the remaining differences," he said.

However, Ruggiero stopped short of imposing a deadline for the talks, stressing that it was more important to concentrate on the problems of negotiations.

He stressed that political issue must not be allowed to interfere with the negotiation.

"The Chinese have to understand that their success in exports needs to be counterbalanced by more market access," said Ruggiero.

"This is a natural equilibrium that exists in the tradition of the general agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) and the WTO," he said.

"My real wish is to encourage the Chinese leadership to concentrate on the remaining problems, so that solutions can be found as soon as possible," he said.

Ruggiero said China had become an important member of the global economy and contrasted China's combined imports and exports for 1979, which totalled only $5 billion, with last year's exports-only total of $151 billion.

He said this meant that WTO members had a 'fundamental interest' in seeing China observe the agreed set of rules and disciplines that the WTO embodied and that China had an interest in writing the rules that would govern the system in the 21st century.

There has been speculation that China's accession to the WTO will be timed for announcement by President Jiang Zemin and U.S. President Bill Clinton at their planned summit meeting later this year. (AFP)

China's Entry to WTO to Take Several Years

PARIS - Negotiations for Chinese entry into the World Trade Organisation (WTO) will take several years, U.S. Deputy Trade Representative Jeffrey Lang said here Wednesday.

Asked if the negotiations, in progress for more than 10 years, could be completed by the end of the year, Lang said: "It does not seem likely to me. We want China in the WTO as soon as possible. But it is very clear for the European Union, the United States and Japan that they have to do two basic things that they have not been willing to do so far."

He said China had to agree with the "basic disciplines" of the WTO and the second requirement "is give each of us an attractive package of measures which will give us access to their markets for goods and services. They have not seriously begun to discuss any of these subjects."

Lang added that the process would "take Beijing several years."

He added: "I think they are beginning to realize that they will have to deal with this problem on a commercial basis and not simply get into the WTO for political reasons. And that realization is the first step towards accelerating the process.

Lang went on "trade negotiations are not a sort of broad generalisation. They deal with details. But the details process has not even begun and it often takes countries several years once this process begins."

Lang, who heads the U.S. delegation to the WTO in Geneva, is distinctly less optimistic than WTO Director-General Renato Ruggiero, who said recently he thought the negotiations with China were in their "final phase."

China held a new round of negotiations early in March in Geneva and offered a concession by agreeing to authorise in the long term all businesses, including foreign companies, to trade freely. Until now trading with foreign countries can only be carried out through approved companies which currently number 12,000.

A new round of negotiations among countries concerned by Chinese membership will take place in may. In the meantime, bilateral, country-to-country consultations will continue. (AFP)

Small Openings, Not Gash, Sank Titanic

WASHINGTON — A new scientific study concludes that six cuts about as wide as a human hand — not a huge gash — doomed the Titanic, the *New York Times* said recently.

The paper said scientists, using sound waves to examine the Titanic's mud-covered bow, calculated that the cuts along the ship's starboard side were enough to send it to the bottom of the Atlantic in less than three hours.

The scientists also conducted computer simulations and metallurgic analysis of Titanic fragments to challenge the theory that the ship's brush with an iceberg on April 14, 1912 caused a 300-foot hole across its bow.

The cuts, each about as wide as a human hand, some 20 feet below the water line prompted six of the ship's watertight holds to flood, the paper said. The ship was built to survive the flooding of only three or four of the compartments.

"Titanic was a victim that night," William Garzke Jr., a member of the scientific team, was quoted as saying in the *Times*. "Everything that could go wrong, did."

The Discovery channel television network and its French counterpart, Ellipse Program, organized the expedition last summer for a program set to air in the United States April 13.

The French state oceanographic group, IFREMER, oversaw the dives to the Titanic's grave off the coast of Newfoundland.

Garzke, a naval architect, speculated that the ship's speed of some 22 knots contributed to the disaster. If the ship had been traveling at half that speed, the damage across the hull would have been dramatically reduced, he said.

The study also backs survivors' reports that the ship snapped in two just before it disappeared. A computer analysis revealed that stresses on the ship were great enough to cause the breakup as the bow plunged and the stern rose.

(AFP)

"Manila Police Can't Shoot Straight"

MANILA — Two out of three policemen in Manila cannot shoot straight, a red-faced Philippine police official admitted Tuesday.

Only one-third of "Manila's finest," the capital city's term of endearment for the 4,000-member police force, passed a "practical shooting" test ordered by senior officers, said senior Superintendent Avelino Razon, the district police chief.

"The other two-thirds need further training or proficiency in the handling of firearms," he said over GMA television station.

The result means the large majority will have to undergo either basic or advanced weapons training courses, he said.

He stressed that the test results should be seen "in a positive light."

"This is something that we should not hide," Razon said. "Let us admit that our policemen lack firearms training and exposure. Now we have an opportunity to improve their skills."

(AFP)

Apartheid Deeds Come Back to Haunt Police Killers

Losers in the fight against the African National Congress, which now rules the country, they seem deflated and bitter as they seek to defend themselves and shift responsibility to their political leaders.

CAPE TOWN — For men who were once feared as hardened apartheid killers, the three South African security policemen hunched before an amnesty tribunal cut sad, broken figures.

Brigadier Jan Cronje and Captains Jaques Hechter and Wouter Mentz are applying to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission for indemnity from prosecution for their actions during the apartheid years.

Losers in the fight against the African National Congress, which now rules the country, they seem deflated and bitter as they seek to defend themselves and shift responsibility to their political leaders.

They have submitted what they say are full accounts of their actions, including murder and torture, as well as psychiatric reports that describe them as disturbed men who drink too much and are afraid of closing their eyes because of the nightmares that haunt them.

The three men grew up in small rural Afrikaner communities and were given regular hidings by their fathers when they stepped out of line. They joined the police because their families were too poor to send them to university.

They appear to be emotionally deadened, their feelings alienated and isolated, a psychiatrist said in his report.

Hatred Leaves Shell of a Man

The report said Cronje, 60, learned to regard blacks as the enemy during the 1970s when he was assigned to what was then Rhodesia — now Zimbabwe — to help Ian Smith's white minority government fight black guerrillas.

"I thought I was acting in the national interest, but today I am not so sure...I hope this unburdening will lead to greater understanding and reconciliation."

"Bad temper, sleeplessness and flashbacks began to plague him...he was working himself to death," the report said.

It diagnosed Cronje, who retired in 1987 after a heart attack, as suffering from severe post-traumatic stress and having a dysfunctional personality.

"After completing the investigation, I had the feeling I still did not know the man," the psychiatrist wrote. "He has literally become empty, there is little left in him for a person to get to know."

In a statement to the commission, Cronje sought to justify his actions as acts of war against an enemy committing terrorist crimes against innocent civilians.

"It was necessary, sanctioned and approved for the police to use methods that would be unacceptable in normal times," he said.

"It was necessary to eliminate insurgents and activists... (because) the justice system was not adequate to deal with the situation."

In his defense, Cronje cited a passage from the autobiography of President Nelson Mandela: "If a man worked for the service, he was probably brainwashed by the government's propaganda. He would have believed we were terrorists... who wanted to drive the white man into the sea."

Discussing Hechter, the psychiatrist described him as confused over his identity.

God's Servant Becomes Executioner

"During the day in the office, he is the 'just' man, God's servant, an Afrikaner formed in the image of his father.

"In contrast is the other persona, the white Afrikaner who fights terrorists by their own methods and serves as an executioner to defend the country against a total onslaught," the psychiatrist wrote.

He said Hechter became disillusioned with Afrikaner religious leaders who asked for God's blessing on the work of the security police.

He realized that he worked for the politicians and that his task was to kill blacks, day and night, the report said.

It said Mentz's father was a poor miner, a tyrant who kicked and beat him.

"Mentz began in standard five (seventh school year) to pull his own hair out in bunches. He still does it, sometimes he pulls half his moustache out," the report said.

"He is severely disturbed psychologically and is fully dysfunctional...he is so sick that he should be hospitalized."

A separate report on Mentz by a clinical psychologist said he suffered repetitive nightmares about traumatic violence, jerking awake anxious and covered in sweat.

"He should never have become a policeman," the psychologist wrote.

Mentz himself told commissioners he still burst into tears when he thought about a police raid on guerrilla suspects about seven years ago in which two children were shot dead.

"I thought I was acting in the national interest, but today I am not so sure...I hope this unburdening will lead to greater understanding and reconciliation," he said.

(Reuter)

FBI Director Warns of Internet Child Abuse

WASHINGTON — FBI director Louis Freeh on Tuesday warned that the Internet is being used by child molesters to lure young children and transmit child pornography.

"Unfortunately the same marvelous advances in computer and telecommunications technology that allow our children to reach out to new sources of knowledge and cultural experiences are also leaving them unwittingly vulnerable to exploitation and harm by pedophiles and other sexual predators in ways never before possible," he said.

Freeh also told members of a Senate appropriations subcommittee that pedophiles were using Internet service "chat rooms" to entice underage children into meeting them as well as to communicate with fellow molesters and create pornography rings.

While the U.S. Supreme Court is currently considering a case which may determine the extent of First Amendment protections to Internet communications, Freeh and others noted that prosecutors are not hindered by U.S. laws when child pornography is concerned.

A previous Supreme Court case determined that child pornography is not protected by the First Amendments guarantee of freedom of speech.

Senators heard from a woman who wished to remain unidentified who called herself "Diane Doe." She said that her 11-year-old son was molested by four teachers and that videotapes of the rapes had been made.

The teachers then contacted other pedophiles by using a chat room through the Prodigy on-line service.

"They used this room to give descriptions of the contents of these pornographic tapes and arranged for the sale and distribution of the tapes," Doe said.

Although her son's molesters were convicted and sent to prison, "there is no way of knowing if someone in another part of the country, or even abroad, has been casually surfing the Internet coming across the images and using them for their own pleasure or gain," she said.

Freeh said that FBI investigations of child pornography transmitted over the Internet have reached as far as pedophiles in England and Germany who were "receiving and transmitting child pornography through an American commercial on-line service."

Neither Freeh nor other witnesses called for new legislation to stop child pornographers and molesters, saying parental education efforts were the best way to protect children from Internet evils.

But under questioning Freeh did acknowledge that a $10 million budget proposal he made for additional FBI staffers to combat the problem was rejected by the administration of President Bill Clinton.

(AFP)

Attorneys Fight Over Simpson's Possessions

LOS ANGELES — Former U.S. football star O.J. Simpson's Heisman trophy and vehicle are among items lawyers are tussling over to settle the $33.5-million wrongful death award against him.

His attorneys filed a "claim of exemption" request on Monday with the Los Angeles County sheriff's department to retrieve some of Simpson's prized items that were hauled away last week from his Brentwood estate.

Simpson was ordered to relinquish his property to satisfy the award against him after a civil jury in February found him liable for the 1994 slashing deaths of his ex-wife Nicole Brown Simpson and her friend Ron Goldman.

The Brown and Goldman families filed the suit and their attorneys meanwhile are fighting to gain possession of expensive items missing from the batch that was confiscated last Friday, including the coveted football trophy and his $65,000 Chevrolet Suburban vehicle.

In a court declaration made public Monday, Simpson said he does not have many of the items the plaintiffs are seeking, including the trophy and the Surburban.

A lawyer for Fred Goldman, the father of Ron Goldman, said he suspects that Simpson's attorneys and business manager may be harboring some of the missing high-priced items, including the trophy and Suburban.

Attorney Peter Csato is seeking an order compelling Simpson's business manager Leroy Taft and other third parties to appear in court to explain the whereabouts of the goods.

In Simpson's court request, attorney Ronald Slates said the law allows civil defendants facing judgments to retain certain household furnishings and personal effects needed for an "ordinary and necessary standard" of living.

"The state in its wisdom provides that even though you may owe money by virtue of a judgment, you are entitled to a certain basic minimum that you can keep," Slates said.

(AFP)

Prisoners to Use Teleconferencing

WASHINGTON — Missouri is set to begin a pilot project that will allow some inmates to use "videoconferencing" to communicate with their families and attorneys.

On Tuesday telecommunications company Sprint announced it has signed an agreement with this midwestern state to install teleconferencing equipment in three state prisons.

People wishing to talk with inmates in those prisons will contact them from public studios.

(AFP)

Police Begin Inquiry Into "Snuff" Films

LONDON — The Dutch Justice Ministry has begun an inquiry into allegations that five children were killed in pornographic "snuff" films made by British men in Amsterdam, a British television report said Wednesday.

A documentary on ITV television quoted a Briton it named as "Edward" who claimed to have watched five films in which young boys were sexually abused, tortured and then killed.

"The boys cried and screamed — they cried out but I did not know in what language," said Edward, who moved to Amsterdam in the late 1980s.

"This was done by people who knew people who wanted to harm children. This was done as a money-making venture. It was also done by very highly organized criminals," he said.

"The people who wanted these tapes to be made were people who wanted to kill children. They wanted the memory of it — they wanted to see it, they wanted to do it and they wanted something to remember it by."

He added: "I can remember each face separately — I can remember them in detail."

He also said he had shown Dutch police a lake near the city where the bodies of the five boys, aged around nine to 11, had been dumped, and a house in Amsterdam where he had seen the films.

He claimed the films had been shot on a barge, and in the background the sounds of water and wildfowl could be heard.

The program said Dutch and British police had both interviewed Edward and were now investigating his allegations, which centered around a ring of British men, including some convicted paedophiles, living or traveling to Amsterdam.

British police interviewed on the program said no police force in the world had ever seen a "snuff" film, but a spokesman said they were familiar with all the men alleged to have taken part in the child pornography.

The program also showed extracts from a videotape released by Swedish police showing the sexual abuse by another man, thought to be British and called John, of an eight-year-old boy called Bjorn.

(AFP)

Son Says Father Killed Him in Previous Life

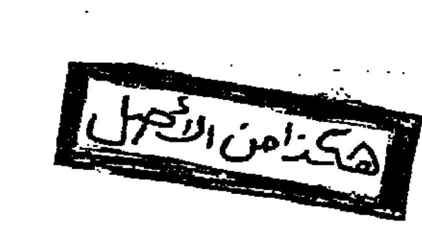
BEIRUT — A Lebanese teenager has confessed to patricide but said he did it because his father had killed him in a previous life.

Amin Kanj Torbey, a 16-year-old Druze resident of the south-eastern Chouf mountains, surrendered to the police after killing his father with four shots from a hunting rifle, a Beirut newspaper said Tuesday.

Torbey told Judge Awni Ramadan he was convinced that his father had killed him in a previous life, the French-language *L'Orient le Jour* said. It did not say when the murder occurred.

The judge asked that a medical commission examine the teenager.

(AFP)



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THOUGHT

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Food-Borne Infectious Diseases on the Rise

GENEVA — More and more people are becoming sick from what they eat because of changing eating habits in favor of pre-prepared food from the supermarket or takeaways, the World Health Organization said last week.

WHO also said at least 30 new infectious diseases with no known treatment, cure or vaccine had emerged in the past two decades and blamed the rapid increase in air travel, growth of mega-cities and inadequate safe water and sanitation.

It said smallpox had been eradicated but that diseases such as malaria, diphtheria and yellow fever were making a comeback in the age of jet travel, slum cities and big population movements.

In a message to mark Monday's World Health Day, WHO said humanity's ancient battle with microbes had yet to be won with diseases of the past such as pneumonic plague reemerging and new bacteria and viruses eluding modern medicine.

AIDS emerged as a global disaster in the early 1980s and could affect nearly 30 million adults by 2000, WHO said. Mad cow disease may be another in the making, and also its incurable human form, the brain-wasting creutzfeldt-jakob disease.

WHO doctors also noted an increase in food-borne emerging infectious diseases such as salmonella and enterohemorrhagic e-coli, which causes bloody diarrhoea, can be fatal especially in children and cause abortions in pregnant women in some cases.

Bacterial and food-borne emerging infectious diseases are on the increase, Klaus Stohr, a doctor at WHO's Emergency Diseases Unit, told Reuters.

People don't have much time to cook their own food anymore, Stohr lamented. We are changing our eating habits.

There is increased demand for pre-prepared food because we are getting more mobile and eating on the run.

Stohr said global statistics for outbreaks of food-borne infectious diseases were not available because very few countries had successful surveillance systems.

The health food craze was also a factor to blame for the increase in food-borne diseases because unprocessed food contained less preservatives, Stohr said.

People are turning to uncooked food, believing it's more healthy. But this is wrong, he said. There is a reason why we pasteurize our milk — because raw milk can be contaminated if not treated properly.

In 1996, 2.5 billion people crossed international borders aboard commercial flights. Another 25 million people have become refugees and millions more are migrant workers living abroad. *(Reuter)*

Teens Who Had Less Salt as Infants Still Have Lower Blood Pressure

DALLAS — The amount of salt in newborns' diets could affect their blood pressure later in life, researchers say.

In the study of 167 Dutch children, those who had been on a low-sodium diet during their first six months of life had lower blood pressure 15 years later, compared with those who ate a normal amount of sodium as infants.

The researchers, led by Johanna M. Geleijnse of Erasmus University Medical School in the Netherlands, speculated that salt might affect infants' sympathetic nervous system, which controls the body's response to alarm by speeding the heart rate and raising blood pressure.

Another possible explanation is that high levels of salt in infancy could damage immature kidneys, which in turn could affect blood pressure later in life.

"Environmental exposures in utero and in infancy may be more important in relation to cardiovascular disease than exposures in adulthood, as 'programming' of different systems and organs in the body occurs very early in life," the researchers said.

The study was published in *Hypertension*, a journal of the American Heart Association.

"I'm very impressed," said Dr. Norman Kaplan, head of the hypertension division at the University of Texas southwestern medical center at Dallas. "Even though it's not a massive study and there's a lot of explanations, it's the first time to my knowledge this has been shown in people."

The low-sodium diet in the 1980 experiment contained 120 milligrams of sodium per day, equivalent to about five-eighths of a teaspoon of table salt. The normal amount of sodium was defined as 330 milligrams per day, or about 1 1/2 teaspoons of table salt.

One of the United States' best-selling formulas, abbott laboratories' similac, contains 27 milligrams of sodium per 5-ounce (147.9 cubic centimeters) serving, or 270 milligrams for the typical 10 servings per day. Abbott's isomil, a soy formula, contains 44 milligrams of sodium per serving.

The research team contacted as many as possible of the 466 children in the study. Of the 167 who participated in the follow-up study, 71 had originally been assigned to the low-sodium diets and 96 to the normal sodium group.

Researchers measured the 15-year-olds' blood pressure and heart rate. After adjusting for height and weight, education, mother's blood pressure and other factors, they found that systolic blood pressure - the higher of the two numbers in a blood-pressure reading - was 3.6 points lower in the low-sodium group than in the normal-sodium group. Diastolic blood pressure was 2.2 points lower. *(AP)*

THE BAD NEWS

Researchers reported the first direct link between Mad Cow Disease and a fatal brain ailment in people. Sick animals and human victims had the same biochemical patterns in their brains, further supporting the contention that eating tainted meat causes the human illness.

New Insight Into Stem Cells in Brain, Marrow

WASHINGTON — Contrary to what scientists have long believed, the central nervous system has stem cells capable of dividing and forming other kind of cells, researchers reported recently.

The finding has potential implications for people with parkinson's disease, spinal cord injury, and other central nervous system disorders.

The work appeared in the *Journal Science*, which contains several reports on stem cells and their potential for regeneration, repair and healing.

Now, Ronald McKay at the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke has shown that these fundamental cells can be grown in culture with growth factors and directed to act like foetal cells.

Although he does not yet know the exact chemical signals that this process requires, he has established that the adult cells are essentially the same as foetal cells and he has identified some proteins involved in cell differentiation.

Scientists' ability to culture these cells will enable them to study their role in brain development and possibly to develop ways of replacing injured brain cells. This may eventually help treat parkinsons and other brain diseases.

In a separate report in science, a team from Allegheny University of the health sciences in Pittsburgh focused on another kind of basic cell, known as marrow stromal cells, found in bone marrow.

Bone marrow transplants are already used to derive stem cells,

(Contd On Pg.14)

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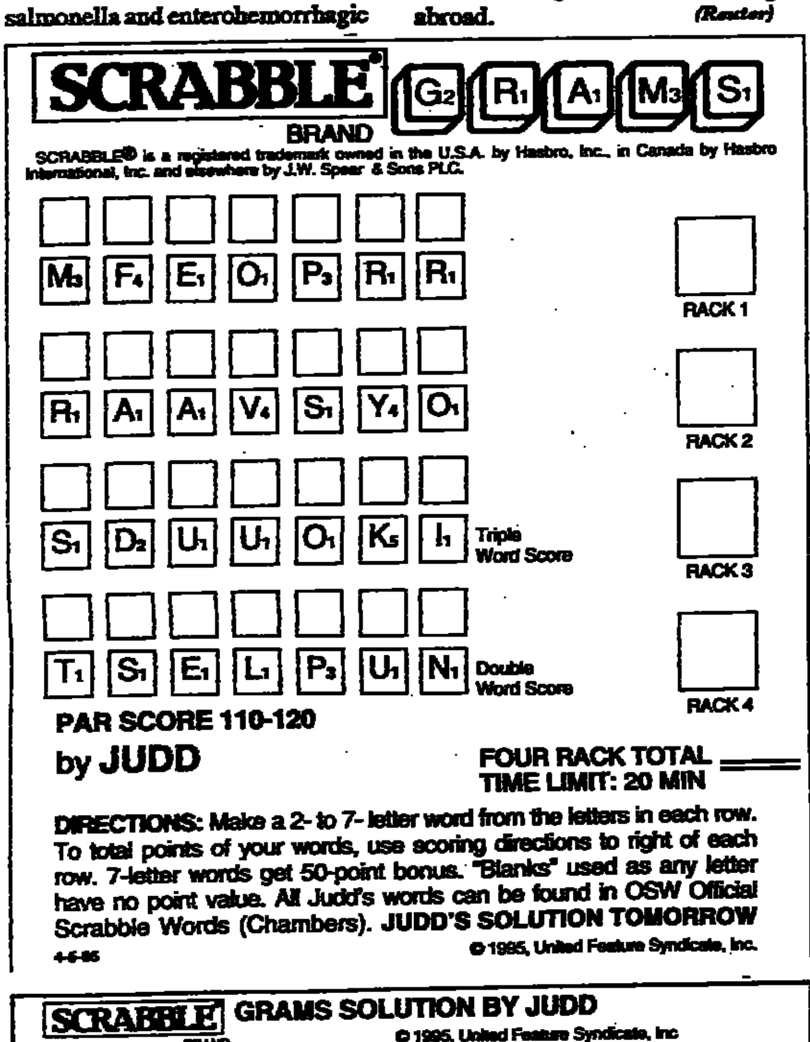
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12-22



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PAR SCORE 185-195 JUDD'S TOTAL 284

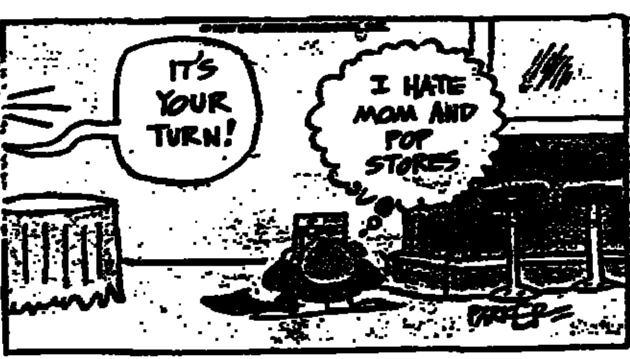
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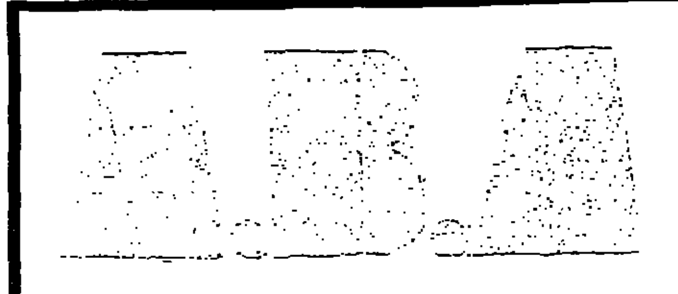












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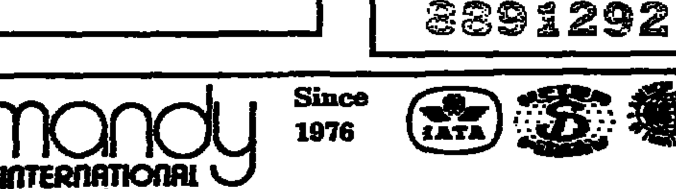
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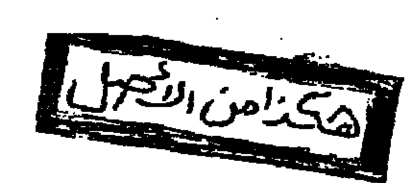
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Vote-Theft Accusations in Northern Ireland Poll

BELFAST — For decades vote early and vote often was a slyly whispered dictum that gave an air of jaunty bravado to Northern Ireland politics. But not any more.

In the heat of a British election crucial to peace hopes and with the threat of guerrilla war in the air, vote-rigging has shed any naive glamor it may have had.

It has been very clear for a considerable time that the whole question of abuse of voting is very serious in Northern Ireland, says nationalist SDLP leader John Hume, pointing an accusing finger at the IRA's political arm, Sinn Fein.

Everbody knows it. Go and check the electoral register as we did in a small area just to demonstrate it, and look at the results we produced.

But Sinn Fein, the SDLP's rival among the region's minority Catholics, vehemently denies its supporters are involved in vote-stealing or trying to manufacture extra votes.

The SDLP engages in this form of negative campaigning every time there is an election. They have yet to produce any evidence to support the allegation, said Sinn Fein's Richard McAuley.

Hume's broadside highlighted the sinister contrast with the election campaign under way in the rest of Britain. Politics Northern Ireland-style are a life and death issue.

In the Mainland's cities and shires, the red rosettes of the opposition Labour Party jostle with the blue of the ruling Conservatives in a bid for national power.

Northern Ireland's struggle is chiefly between orange and green, the ancient battle colors of Protestant and Catholic.

Pro-British unionist parties fight an unremitting battle for votes inside the Protestant majority community and at the end of the day their so-called unionist family ends up with more parliamentary seats than the Irish Catholic minority.

Battle for Catholic Vote

This time a rare battle is being waged for the soul of the Catholic minority. Hopes of an electoral pact have collapsed.

The SDLP faces a stiff Sinn Fein challenge and insults fly.

My party has revealed evidence of continuing intention to engage in every kind of electoral malpractice, from multiple registration of their (Sinn Fein) own members to the forging of (voter-identity) medical cards to facilitate vote-stealing, Hume wrote on February 20 in Belfast's Irish news.

Hume said there had been attempts to intimidate two SDLP officials who carry out anti-impersonation duties in polling stations at each election. There had been hypocritical and false allegations that the SDLP steals votes.

Sinn Fein has condemned attacks on two SDLP councillors' homes and says Republicans will not indulge in electoral abuse.

Senior Sinn Fein official Martin McGuinness said: The slogan 'vote often and vote early' was a maxim long before Sinn Fein came into electoral politics and it was perfected by the so-called constitutional parties.

Sinn Fein is banned from peace talks on Northern Ireland's future until the outlawed Irish Republican Army (IRA) renews a ceasefire broken in February 1996.

Northern Irish Campaigning Differs From Mainland

Northern Ireland's campaign climate is vastly different from the bread and butter polemics that underpin the hustings haggling of the big London-based parties.

Irish Republican Army extremists, spurning entreaties from moderate Catholics and political leaders London, Dublin and Washington, are waging war on British rule.

Election day will see armed police positioned outside polling stations. Military patrols complete the image of the troubled province as a place apart.

In last May's province-wide elections for a local assembly, a polling station in nationalist Londonderry city was turned into a riot zone at the end of the day-long voting.

Youths threw petrol bombs and rocks at police trying to escort ballot-boxes from the station to a central count.

Voting Irregularities Date From Partition

Claims about widespred vote-stealing have dogged elections fought by Protestant and Catholic parties since Britain retained Northern Ireland after Irish partition 75 years ago.

Arson, street clashes and guerrilla conflict in 1969 forced thousands in Belfast to flee burnt-out homes to safer areas.

Widespread postal voting was introduced to ease fears among Catholics and Protestants that they would be intimidated by the other side if they returned to their old areas to vote.

Down the years polling stations and my staff in many areas have been subjected to stones, petrol bombs and the occasional shot. They and police escorting the ballot boxes have been attacked and injured, said chief electoral officer Pat Bradley.

Voting at polling stations is overseen by representatives of the rival parties who scrutinize electors before they cast their ballot in secret. Since 1985 voters must show identity documents but party agents may challenge them if in doubt.

Bradley says he is always concerned for the probity of the electoral system but has no evidence of organized personation, although there are signs of postal vote malpractice.

Last May there were allegations of a seriously high level of personation, particularly in respect of west Belfast.

I was clearly concerned at such allegations and asked publicly for at least some examples to be given to me so that the matter could be investigated. .. I still have not received a single example, he told Reuters.

Bradley said names could be innocently duplicated on a draft register of voters, but there would also be people who would attempt to abuse the system.

It is difficult to say for certain whether personation goes on at a major scale, said Sydney Elliott, a politics lecturer at Queen's University in Belfast. But in some constituencies the level of party competition is such that in all probability old practices still remain.

Bradley, who acts as an independent monitor in elections in foreign trouble-spots, said: I have never come across any place where there is perfection. I have never said there is perfection here.

(Reuter)

Labour Virtually Rule Out London Joining Euro by 2002

LONDON — The opposition Labour Party practically ruled out Britain's participation in a single European currency during the lifetime of the next government if it wins the May 1 general election.

Shadow Foreign Secretary Robin Cook told independent GMTV television that "formidable obstacles" stood in the way of London's participation in the first phase of the planned single currency on January 1, 1999.

And he added: "If you didn't join in 1999, it is unlikely you would be joining in the course of the next Parliament" — due to last five years.

"If you didn't join in 1999, it's very difficult to see a government that has taken the decision that Britain wasn't ready in 1999, coming to the decision that it would be ready by the year after or the year after that," said Cook.

The comments came after British Chancellor Kenneth Clarke told a meeting of EU finance ministers in the Netherlands that a delay was being widely contemplated.

Whether a sufficient number of countries were going to meet the qualifying conditions would not become clear until late this year, Clarke said.

However, most countries saw their chance of launching a single currency by January 1999 increase after Germany indicated that it would accept a flexible interpretation of the qualifying conditions.

Labour, like the ruling Conservative Party of John Major, have pledged that the matter will go to a referendum if the government of the day decides to join a single currency.

But Cook told the television: "I doubt whether any government is going to have such a referendum immediately before a general election.

"So, in the event that Britain doesn't join in the first wave, while we will continue to review this and look carefully at the figures, I would have thought the probability is that one is looking towards the subsequent Parliament." The Conservatives, trailing to Labour in pre-election opinion polls, have already said that it was "highly improbable" that Britain would be ready to join by 1999.

(AFP)

Italy Copes With Albanian Refugee Influx

ROME — Though Italy's politicians remain split over whether to send troops for a multinational force to Albania, its cities have wasted no time in adopting their own ways to cope with the refugee flight onto Italian shores.

While southern cities like Brindisi — given its prime location as an Adriatic port — were more or less forced to open its doors, other cities, particularly in the more affluent north like Milan, refused outright to take in anyone.

Bologna, also in the north, has vacillated, but so far kept any refugees away, as has Rimini, the northeast seaside resort and a pearl of Italian tourism, where city fathers have fanned fears that a refugee influx could damage the summer tourist trade.

With 64,000 members, Albanians form Italy's second largest immigrant community, after Moroccans, with Italy the first stop across the Adriatic and long a source for blackmarket jobs to send hard currency back home.

Since mid-March, their numbers have swollen by another 13,000 fleeing the anarchy devasting what is already Europe's poorest nation.

Rome, which an estimated 4,000 illegal Albanians already call home, has steadfastly refused to take any more inside city limits.

But Rome's Mayor Francesco Rutelli has not turned the southern city's back altogether, offering "all human and material resources" to help Albanian refugees. Last Thursday, he launched a campaign to raise funds for refugee centers in nearby areas.

Milan, the capital of prosperous Lombardy where the secessionist spirit runs deep, has not followed Rome's example.

"Not a single community building or center will be made available to welcome these people. I reaffirm our total blockade against allowing any Albanian refugees into Milan," said Milan Mayor Marco Formentini, a member of the Northern League.

His party, which promotes independence for the more industrialized north, has insisted that Albanians will bring in disease, exploiting racist stereotypes that see Albanians as poor, violent and delinquent.

Should Milan be forced to accept refugees, Formentini said he would demand "guarantees to ensure proper hygene," insisting he was "expressing the general feeling in Milan."

An official with the Italian Roman Catholic Charity Caritas said some of Milan's bad feeling harks back to the first huge Albanian exodus to Italy in 1991, after the fall of the hardline communist regime that had kept Albania Europe's most isolated nation.

"The Albanians then had real difficulty integrating, with a lot of violence and a lot of aggression," the official said.

Street scenes also fuel hostility. The Caritas official said that everyday Milan residents dodge hundreds of refugee children of various origins already begging on the city's streets and fear an influx of Albanians will only add to this.

To offset the resistance, officials in Rome and Bologna have spearheaded the creation of a team within the National Association of Italian Cities (ANCI) to try to work out a more "homogenous distribution" of Albanian refugess.

He said 6,000 of the 13,000 Albanians who arrived in the last four weeks are still housed at camp grounds or Caritas and Red Cross centers in the southern Puglia region, near the ports of Brindisi and Bari where they landed.

The approaching summer season adds urgency. Amato Ramondetti, in charge of tourism for the Italian Commerce Confederation, estimated that holiday bookings are down 50 percent over last year for Pugli and Tuscany in "a direct negative effect of the Albanian crisis."

"A handful of cities cannot be alone in bearing the moral and financial burder of receiving refugees," said Anci spokesman Carmine Peliccioni. "We are here to say which towns and cities might be best adapted to take them in."

Rome's eagerness over the multinational force to Albania — which it has offered to command and contribute half the 5,000 troops — is aimed largely at stemming the refugee influx, triggered by the collapse of bogus investment schemes that touched off an armed insurrection in Albania.

But the plan hit a new snag when the head of Italy's rightwing opposition, Silvio Berlusconi, dropped a bombshell on the center-left government, saying he will not back its motion to send Italian any troops.

Meanwhile time is running out. France and Spain have already announced the imminent departure of units for the force, which was to have been set up around April 14.

(AFP)

Italian PM Prodi's Popularity Hits Low

ROME — Italian Prime Minister Romano Prodi's popularity has fallen to its lowest level since his election victory almost one year ago, an opinion poll said.

The survey among 1,000 Italians by the explorer group for *La Stampa* newspaper also showed the main opposition center-right freedom alliance nearly five percentage points ahead of Prodi's center-left Olive Tree coalition in terms of voter support.

It showed a 47 percent approval rating for Prodi, down from 53 percent in the previous survey on March 3 and well adrift of a high of 68 percent last August 5.

The government's satisfaction rating also dropped, down to 23 percent from 27 percent and a peak of 44 percent last July 1.

Prodi's coalition won a historic general election victory last April 21 and took office in May as the first government to include the left since the end of World War II.

The rival blocs face their first major test of popular support since last year on April 27 when some nine million Italians will be eligible to vote in local elections in more than 1,100 towns and cities, including Milan and Turin.

Asked how they would vote in a general election, 45.6 percent of respondents said for the freedom alliance and 40.8 percent for the Olive Tree. The others were don't knows.

La Stampa said the drop in support for Prodi and his government reflected dissatisfaction over new revenue-raising measures brought in under a supplementary budget announced last month to keep the 1997 deficit in Check.

The 15.5 trillion lire ($93 billion) package, on top of tax-raising measures in the full 1997 budget, was drawn up to try to ensure the deficit stays within the ceiling of three percent required for joining Europe's planned single currency.

La Stampa said bickering and hesitation in Prodi's alliance over the crisis in Albania had also affected voter opinions.

It added, however, that a slim majority of 50.6 percent approved of plans for an Italian-led security force for Albania, while 62.9 percent agreed with the government that Albanian refugees should receive temporary shelter in Italy.

(Reuter)

British Cheesemakers Seek Slice of French Market

PARIS — Undeterred by comparisons with selling ice to Antarctica or sand to the Arabs, British dairy producers are vying for a bigger bite of France's cheese market.

The French are already so spoiled for choice, from creamy Camemberts to green-veined Roqueforts, that late President Charles de Gaulle once observed that a country producing 246 cheeses was ungovernable.

Touting cheeses with names like Stinking Bishop or Cornish Yarg, British producers are hoping to add to the anarchic range of cheese in a land convinced it has the world's finest cuisine — and widely convinced that much British food is foul.

"On the one hand, it's like carrying coals to Newcastle. On the other we may have a chance because this is a very discerning market," said Stephen Fletcher of Ram Hall in England, who hopes to export his Tangy Ewe's milk cheeses.

British producers of cow, goat, sheep and even buffalo cheese point to the surprise success of British retailer Marks and Spencer in France — it even sells plastic-wrapped fish and chips with vinegar, a typical British dish, in France.

The French are already so spoiled for choice, from creamy Camemberts to green-veined Roqueforts, that late President Charles de Gaulle once observed that a country producing 246 cheeses was ungovernable.

"We sold 125 tons of British cheese last year in our 20 shops," said MS spokeswoman Francoise Martin after the launch of the cheese export drive at the British Embassy.

The company's cheese sales, mostly Cheddar and Stilton but also Cheshire and Red Leicester, account for about 75 percent of tiny British cheese sales in France.

Britain has had other cultural upsets in Paris — including the appointments last year of fashion designers John Galliano at Christian Dior or Alexander McQueen at Givenchy.

From Chalk to Cheese in 30 Years

Michel Roux, a French chef who runs one of only four restaurants in Britain with three stars in the Michelin Guide, the gourmet's bible, said British cheeses had improved dramatically in recent decades.

British officials insisted cheese was not a backdoor way of rehabilitating British cattle in France, a year after the crisis over mad cow disease led to a worldwide ban on British beef exports.

"Thirty years ago in Britain there was no good cheese apart from Stilton and Cheddar. It all tasted like chalk," he said.

"But many new British cheeses are not gimmicky...if a French cheese master put it in his shop, he'd hit the jackpot," he said. There's also a snob factor — the French like to try anything that's British, at least once.

But he said foreign cheese producers faced the same problem as drink exporters from Australia, Chile, South Africa or California — the French are convinced their products are best.

"Many new world drinks are excellent, but the French drink their own," said Roux, who runs the Waterside Inn in Berkshire, southern England.

"It makes me a bit sick that I can't sell in France," said Robert Pouget, a Frenchman who lives in England and now wants to export his Oxford Blue Cheese. "One problem is that some mass-produced French blues aren't as expensive as mine."

French pride about cheese — hard, gooey, crumbly or smelly — stretches back a long way.

Pliny the Elder Raved About French Cheese

In the first century ad, the Roman historian Pliny the Elder wrote that the most prized cheeses in Rome were from Nimes, the Lozere area or villages in Gevaudan. Historians believe he was referring to the ancestors of Cantal and Roquefort.

The problem is the diversity of French cheeses, said Christian Le gall of Z. Lanquetot, a wholesaler at the giant Rungis Food Market near Paris, who won a certificate from the British Embassy for selling British cheese.

"Any shop owner who sells British or other foreign cheeses will have to make space by taking away one of their existing cheeses. That's a tough decision," he said.

He said he sold three tons of British cheese last year, a tiny fraction of the 1,500 tons of French cheese he sold, such as Brie, Comte, Beaufort or Munster.

France already consumes quantities of foreign cheese such as Swiss Gruyere, Greek (and sometimes unwittingly Danish) Feta, Dutch Edam or Italian Parmesan.

But with the notable exception of Crumbly Blue Stilton, most British cheeses have yet to graduate from the mousetrap to the French Gourmet's table.

Potential candidates for export to France include Wensleydale — mixed with ginger, cranberries or apricots — Cumberland, Yorkshire Blue, Tiskey Meadow, Sage Derby, Double Gloucester or Cheddar.

British officials insisted cheese was not a backdoor way of rehabilitating British cattle in France, a year after the crisis over mad cow disease led to a worldwide ban on British beef exports.

Dairy products have not been tied to the fatal brain disease.

Cheese has been made at least since the Stone Age in Britain. It got a boost from Cistercian monks who introduced their techniques about 1,000 years ago — from France.

(Reuter)

Astro-Net

The Internet includes hundreds of sites offering astrological goodies and personalized horoscopes. Indolink (http://www.genius.net/indolink/astro/hrsc) is a site which features a daily prediction by "Anjali" based on the Indian system.

"Astro.net" is another site which astrology buffs will find rewarding. It includes a note on what horoscope can do for you which include:

Horoscopes can provide personal insight.

Skeptics and believers alike can use the horoscope as a jumping-off point for deeper exploration of the self.

Horoscopes have great entertainment value, providing hours of juicy information to talk about.

Many people appreciate them as gifts.

(Courtesy The Hindu)

IBM Enters Digital TV Sector

LAS VEGAS — IBM on Monday announced its entry into the digital television sector, saying its "Logicast" would give viewers some of the benefits of digital TV without buying a new set.

"IBM logicast enables viewers to enjoy many of the benefits of digital television without having to buy a new digital TV. In addition, Logicast can be used by the industry for the transition to high definition television (HDTV)," IBM said in a statement.

The announcement came here during the convention of the National Association of Broadcasters.

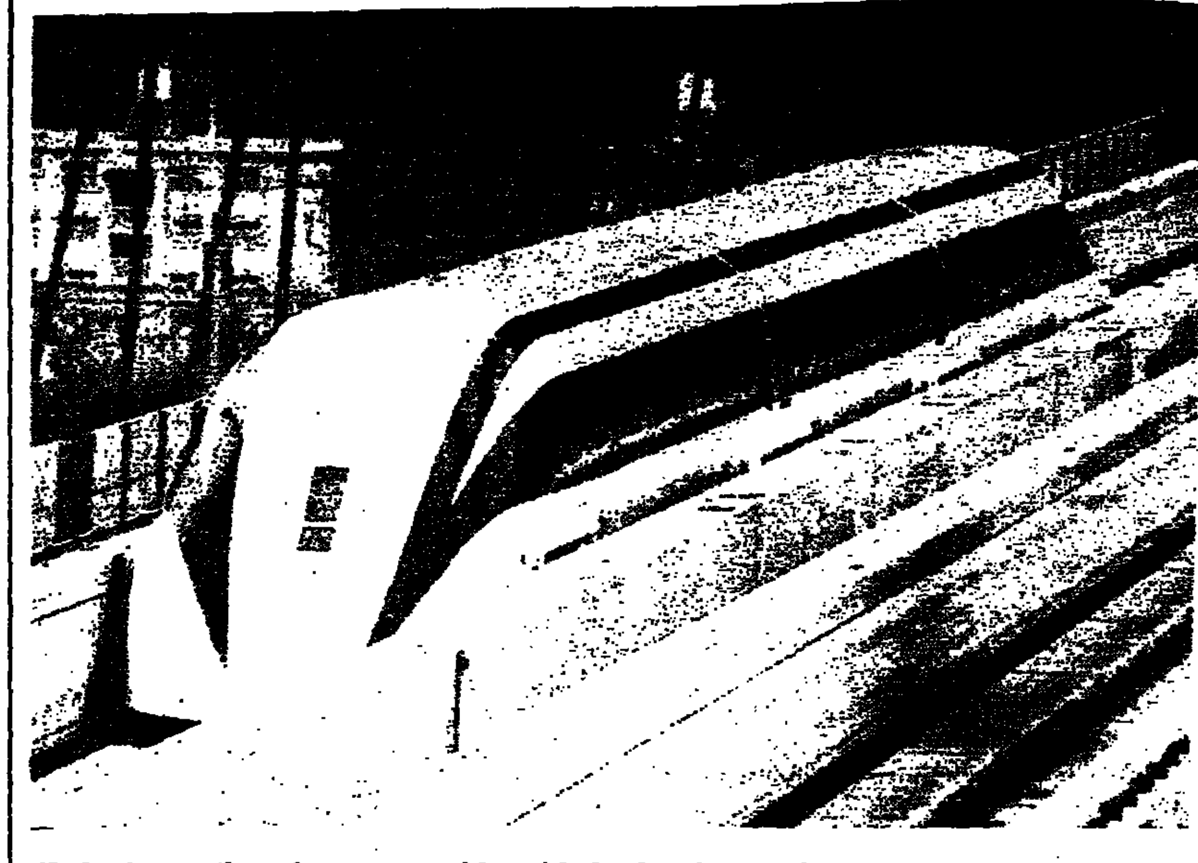
"The IBM Logicast solution provides an environment for introducing new services without the significant investment and risk of interactive television or video-on-demand systems," said William Beckmann, vice president of IBM Video Enabled Solutions.

IBM said it had already installed a digital television broadcasting system for an Italian cable system.

The market for digital television is expected to take off starting in 1998, when Washington will approve digital broadcasting.

IBM faces competition in the sector from electronic companies such as Sony and computer companies like Hewlett-Packard.

(AFP)



TSURU, Japan (Files): The prototype of the newly developed test model of superconducting magnetically levitated linear motor car "Magrev" speeds during the first test run in a file photo in Tsuru, Yamasashi Prefecture. The test run took place on April 4. The test model of the linear motor train of Central Japan Railway Co. is scheduled to reach its speed at 550 kilometers per hour within the year, becoming the fastest train in the world.

(AFP PHOTO)

Briton Travels at the Speed of Nature, by Horse

LONDON — Eight years ago James Greenwood, an old Etonian with a degree in social sciences, left a budding financial career in the city of London and set out to travel around the world on horseback.

Starting from Buenos Aires, his travels have so far taken him across South America — Argentina, Bolivia and Peru — and through Japan, Malaysia, India, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Iran and Turkey.

Horses are nomadic creatures and, with the proper care, they thrive on trips like this, he says. The ones he has used so far — around 15 — have all been found safe homes afterwards.

In April, he started the last leg from Istanbul to London.

Once he gets home, he believes he'll be the first man to have circled the globe on horseback.

"You could really do it faster, in a quarter of that time, but I don't think there's any point," he said in an interview.

"I like to spend a lot of time choosing my horses. I like to spend time in a country, meeting people and learning about them, so I'm very, very slow."

The various stages of his journey are interspersed with periods in England where he painstakingly organizes the next section of his trip. He also takes time out to write and lecture because you need a break.

Greenwood grew up among horses, in the countryside of southwest England. At 15, his grandfather gave him a book by A. F. Tschiffely, who rode from Buenos Aires to Washington more than 50 years ago.

Of all his adolescent dreams, that was the one which captured him. Traveling east to west, with the sun behind him, his route around the world has been designed on two principles — which places interested him and where there was water for the horses.

"I really worry more about the horses than I do about myself," he said. "Because if they go wrong, the whole trip goes wrong."

The various stages of his journey are interspersed with periods in England where he painstakingly organizes the next section of his trip. He also takes time out to write and lecture because you need a break.

His initial 35 kg (77 lbs) of luggage has been cut down to a mere three (6.6), including a veterinary kit and shoeing equipment.

Local wisdom has also proved effective, like the poisonous snake pickled in sake which proved an effective overnight cure for his very lame horse in Japan. Also good for coughs, he tried it himself to see what it was like.

Greenwood's global ride is partly sponsored by the International League for the Protection of Horses (ILPH), an animal welfare organization.

As progress makes horses dispensable, many breeds are in danger of extinction. Many others are neglected or mistreated for a variety of reasons, including cultural and religious ones.

Book Inspired Journey Around World

"I have been frightened by man, terrified by elements," says Greenwood. He survived a bombing raid in Kabul and a strike of lightning which incinerated a tree near his tent.

"The base is so heavily mined that I had to take a guide to show me where I could pee safely," he wrote in his diary at an old Russian base in Afghanistan occupied by soldiers of the Kabul government.

Greenwood Rarely Pays for Shelter

Sleeping in the open, in a tent, in palaces, in government guest houses, huts, sheds, he very rarely pays and has shared his sleeping quarters with all sorts of creatures.

A lot of money is spent on grain for the horses, but he has been forced to live on water alone for several days.

One night, when crossing the Peruvian countryside, he and his horses were sheltered by the local priest, who told Greenwood to make himself at home.

Thirsty and hungry as he was, the Briton had several cups of tea and stuffed himself with some small biscuits he found, with butter and jam.

On returning, his host sat in front of him and smiled. "In all my 30 years, I've never seen anybody enjoy communion wafers as much as you," he said.

Greenwood was 24 when he started. He is now 32, married and with a young child.

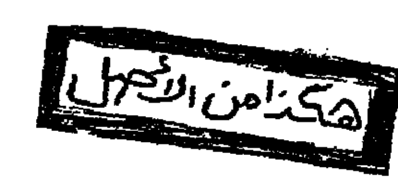
"Sometimes I like to ask myself: why are you doing this? I think it's important to question yourself about it.

"But so far, I don't do it because I said I was going to. I do it because I want to, because I can both give and receive through it.

Horses are nomadic creatures and, with the proper care, they thrive on trips like this, he says. The ones he has used so far — around 15 — have all been found safe homes afterwards.

The last one, Antaar, met him in Istanbul and Greenwood hopes to take him to England.

(Reuter)



اهکذا من الأصل



Some 4m Tanzanians Face Famine

DAR ES SALAAM — Nearly four million people in Tanzania are threatened with starvation and 138,765 tons of cereals are needed to feed them before the next harvest in September, President Benjamin Mkapa said.

In a radio and television address late Monday, Mkapa said his government would make sure that emergency food aid reached people in affected areas.

The most hard-hit regions include, Arusha, Mara, Mwanza, Shinyanga and Singida in north, the Indian Ocean coastal strip, villages around the central city of Dodoma, the Kilimanjaro area and the southwestern province of Lindi.

"Initial reports indicate that 3,920,563 people, representing 14.2 percent of all Tanzanians, face food shortages", Mkapa said.

The government has ordered the distribution of 10,000 tons of maize from the national strategic grain reserve to affected areas, he added.

The famine has been caused by a long period of drought, which ended about two weeks ago with the onset of torrential rains. The rains have caused floods in many parts of the country and have hindered relief food distribution efforts. (AFP)



Agencies Work to Feed and Repatriate Rwandan Refugees

NAIROBI — Humanitarian aid agencies dug to help up to 100,000 Rwandan refugees return home, but said large-scale repatriation would likely not start for another week.

Despite teething problems with the operation — an aid truck carrying food was looted late Monday — emergency aid is slowly getting to those who need it most.

Two planes landed Monday in the rebel-held northeast city of Kisangani with a total of 55 tons of food for 80-100,000 refugees camped out on the road and railway line south.

The deliveries included protein-enriched food for those in the worst health, with scores of people dying daily after wandering through the Zairean forests for six months ahead of the rebel onslaught.

UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) spokesman Paul Stromberg said a truck belonging to the World Food Program was looted by local people while taking protein biscuits and enriched milk to camps in the area.

"We lost the consignment but no one was hurt," he said by telephone, adding that rebel soliders later searched the area and got some of the milk back.

"We're setting up a system to also help the local population," he said, as they sometimes "resented" all the aid going to Rwandans.

Problems had also arisen with local farmers whose fields had been raided, he added, and a system of compensation may be set up.

The repatriation operation is one of the biggest ever undertaken by the UN refugee agency. Rebel leader Laurent Kabila gave his permission for it at the weekend only after intense international pressure.

WFP officials have said they have three planes which could be used to fly a total of 500 refugees home a day.

Brenda Barton, the WFP spokeswoman in Nairobi, said they could fly with aid to Kisangani, and return with refugees to Bukavu or Goma — two towns that lie on the border with Rwanda — or to the Rwandan capital Kigali itself.

Trains and lorries are also being used to take food to the refugees south of Kisangani.

Stromberg indicated that the repatriation process itself could start at the weekend, but he said it needed "another week to 10 days" before it could begin.

Selection for the first planeloads of refugees to be repatriated to Rwanda was based on medical grounds, he said. The operation itself could last two to three months.

Stromberg said 96 refugees died at the Kasese and Biaro camps which shelter 50,000 and 30,000 refugees respectively. The number of deaths, mainly from malnutrition, had stood Sunday at 180 in the two camps.

The UN refugee agency had warned last week that large numbers of refugees were dying of hunger, exhaustion and disease. (AFP)

Bangladesh Tribals Return to Warm Welcome

RAMGARH, Bangladesh—After a musical send-off in India, Bangladeshi tribespeople are returning home to a warm welcome following more than 10 years of self-exile.

Despite the hoopla, the prospect of returning to their homes in Bangladesh's war-wracked Chittagong Hill tracts has made many refugees apprehensive.

I am not sure what will happen once we go back, said refugee Sharan Kumar, speaking at Ramgarh village near India's northeast Tripura state.

I am driven by nostalgia. People (in Tripura) were so friendly and helpful, said another returnee at Ramgarh, which serves as a border transit point.

Bangladesh completed the first phase of taking back up to 50,000 tribal refugees who fled to Tripura state to escape an insurrection by Shanti Bahini rebels. The refugees began returning on March 28.

About 6,700 refugees were to return in the first phase, officials said.

The second phase will begin a month later so refugee leaders can visit the hill tracts to see how the rehabilitation is progressing.

The Shantis began the insurgency in 1973 to gain autonomy for the rugged 5,500 sq-mile (14,200 sq-km) hill tracts bordering India and Burma.

More than 8,500 rebels, government soldiers and civilians have been killed in the fighting, according to official figures.

Mixed Feelings Among Returnees

Although it meant they could return home after more than 10 years in Indian camps, the refugees had mixed feelings.

I am delighted to be back home. Now I wish to live in peace, which of course remains to be seen, said Aongju Marma.

Warm farewells have been given daily to departing refugees on the Indian side at Kathalchhari, a village on the bank of the Feni River. The river flows between Tripura and Khagrachhari, one of three hill tracts districts.

Baidyanath Majumdar, deputy chief minister of Tripura, and several of his colleagues attended the initial farewell on March 28, in which local residents sang and danced the homeward-bound tribespeople on their way.

Back in Bangladesh, they were welcomed with nationalist songs played over loudspeakers. Come home and give us a hand in development of the country where we all belong, one song said.

Thousands of people gathered on both sides of the river to witness the homecoming.

Yet an atmosphere of gloom hung over the waiting camp set up at Kathalchhari for returnees, and a few women cried.

Promises of Good Treatment

Tripura officials, including district magistrate K. Rajeswar Rao, said they believed the returnees would be well-treated and properly rehabilitated in Bangladesh.

I am convinced things will turn out nicely for them, Rao told reporters.

Bangladesh's parliamentary chief Whip Abul Hasanat Abdullah, head of the Repatriation Committee, said: There is nothing to worry about. Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina is herself very keen for peaceful return of the refugees, and she is taking bold steps to restore peace in the hill tracts.

He referred to recent talks between the government and the Parbatya Chattagram Janasanghati Samity (PCJSS), political wing of the Shanti Bahini, in Dhaka.

Further talks are due soon, officials said.

The main sticking point is the PCJSS's demand for the expulsion of some 300,000 Bengali-speaking settlers who have moved into the hill tracts, officials said.

The government has so far refused to budge on the issue and is also reluctant to pull out all troops from the region.

Officials said Bangladesh needed to keep some military garrisons in the hill tracts although it might eventually agree to close down most of the area's 500 army camps.

A settlement of the hill tracts dispute would make the army most happy, said a senior military officer in the region. (Reuter)

New UN Chief Supports Efforts of Special Peace Mission for Afghanistan

ISLAMABAD — UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan held his first meeting with his appointed peace mediator for Afghansitan and gave his "full support" to the special envoy's mission, UN officials said.

Annan was briefed by mediator Norbert Holl in New Delhi on the political and military situation in Afghanistan and discussed how the peace efforts could be strengthened, they said.

Annan assured his "full support to the UN peace mission and the measures that can strengthen its efforts," a statement issued from the special mission's office here said.

Holl, who returned here after the meeting, was due to leave Wednesday for New York for a series of meetings with senior UN officials and to brief the UN Security Council on April 14 on Afghanistan.

He will also address a meeting in New York of 21 countries with interest and influence in the war-torn state and hold bilateral consultations with their governments.

He will later visit geneva to address a meeting there on April 21 of donor countries which make up an Afghan support group and also hold consultations with UN humanitarian commissioner for refugees and other UN officials.

Holl will return to the region on April 25 to continue his mission aimed at ending the factional war in Afghanistan. (AFP)

Chinese Vice Premier Urges Shift From Exam-Based Education

BEIJING — Chinese Vice Premier Li Lanqing has urged the country's education sector to shift away from its traditional reliance on examinations as the sole judge of performance.

Chinese schools should seek to produce students of high quality, rather than those who are good at taking exams but lack all-round abilities, Li was quoted as saying by the Xinhua news agency on Wednesday.

"This is an issue of more than just educational skills," Li said during a tour of eastern China.

"It's an issue of the guiding policy of education, and an issue that has a significant bearing on the future of the country," he added.

China's reliance on exams stretches back more than 1,300 years to the Sui Dynasty (589-618), which introduced the imperial examination system, under which young men seeking to work in government would descend on the capital once a year to compete for posts.

Then, as now, the emphasis was on a student's ability to learn texts by rote and then reproduce them under exam conditions. (AFP)

Romanian University Offers Teaching in Hungarian

BUCHAREST — The largest university in Romania's Transylvania region said it was willing to offer courses in all disciplines in Hungarian language, ending a restriction long viewed as discriminatory by the country's large Hungarian minority.

An academic commission at the Babes-Bolyai University in Cluj, Transylvania, said it would offer courses in Hungarian and German if Romania's new centrist government first introduced legislation authorizing university teaching in languages other than Romanian.

We have proclaimed our university multi-cultural, allowing instruction in Romanian, Hungarian and German, Rector Andrei Marga said.

A ruling by the commission said the university's 18 faculties would have full autonomy to offer instruction in the languages they chose.

About 2,800 of 14,700 students enrolled at Babes-Bolyai are ethnic Hungarians. Just over half take courses in theology and Hungarian literature in their mother tongue, permitted under Romania's restrictive 1995 post-communist language laws.

Romania's ethnic Hungarians, accounting for 1.6 million of a population of 23 million, complain of discrimination in both the communist era and in the seven years following the overthrow of dictator Nicolae Ceausescu.

Most live in Transylvania, only reclaimed by Romania from the defunct Austro-Hungarian Empire in 1918.

Ethnic Germans, 800,000-strong before World War II, now number no more than 90,000 after mass emigration, including purchases per head by the German government of people wishing to leave under Ceausescu's autocratic rule.

Last year Romania signed a treaty with Hungary intended to end longstanding suspicions between the two neighbors.

The election last year of a centrist Parliament and President Emil Constantinescu, ending seven years of rule by ex-communists, has further improved ties. Two ethnic Hungarians were given ministries for the first time.

Prime Minister Victor Ciorbea, a native of Transylvania, pledged during a visit to Budapest last month to press for new legislation to improve Hungarian language rights. (Reuter)



IRAN, THE LAND OF TRANQUILLITY AND DELIGHT

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN — With its rich historical monuments, well maintained and protected, Italy is one of those countries visited by millions of tourists each year. The crisis-striken economy of this country turns on the tourism income.

Due to the importance of tourism industry in today's world, Italian view on tourism of a country cannot be easily neglected.

Iran and Italy have long enjoyed friendly relations. The following is a report from the *Journal of Tourism* published by Research Center of Tourism Industry. The report, in turn, is quoted from the Italian *Si Magazine*.

It seems that the writer of the report is well familiar with the Iranian civilization and culture. Studying the history of Iran and visiting this country, the writer gets acquainted with the political, cultural, economic and tourist affairs of this Islamic country.

His report sparks a positive attitude in European's mind toward Iran. Due to the recent subversive propaganda against Iran launched by some European and Western countries specially the United States, publication of such reports in an Italian magazine may prove to be of great importance. It is an indicative of the fact that Iran is the land of beauty, peace and a reliable country for international investments.

"Covering 4,000 kilometers with a camera in hand, in a country who insists to administer its unique foreign and domestic policy, is so attractive. Iran is now making logical efforts in its relations with the world and it is still safeguarding its moral, spiritual and religious ideals with sovereignty.

Generally speaking, Iran is a country of delightful nature with breathtaking tourist attractions.

This ancient vast country, enclosed like a gem among Turkey, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iraq, ... is a fabulous country brightening the whole region.

One could witness juxtaposition of fantastic colors: the blue blue sky, green green land, white and brown hills and colorful cities. Even the deserts in Iran, manifest their own beauty.

Still there are numerous signs of ancient Persia. Adobe structures, used at the times before Christ, are seen everywhere. They bake clay in open furnaces to make bricks.

When you walk in the streets and alleys, colorful fruits peering from over the walls reveal the rich blessings of God in this land. People in Iran buy fruits in several kilos, in packets. Fruit consumption rate in Iran is very high.

Iran is one of those countries in which people love to live near each other in peace. They pay attention to the problems of their neighbors. They treat their neighbors as members of their families.

The mosques play a pivotal role in the Iranian life. In spite of their simple structure, the mosques in Iran have always been important, colorful and a place to refine one's inner being. They are mostly adorned with colorful ceramic works and is kept, washed and cleaned by a man or woman who has a place to live in the mosque.

Water and Worship

In plateaus, where there is a water spring or a water well, nomadic people gather together to make their living. They prepare everything themselves: a perfect example of self-sufficiency.

Water and worship are the essence of life in a proud and fantastic country who has inherited a rich culture.

The pages of history in this country reveal great events as tumults, wars and invasions of great emperors, victories, etc..

Artists, warriors, war engineers in this country, have been responsible for redevelopment of Persia after





bloody wars.

Iran is surrounded by ranges of mountains, the highest ones in the heart of Asia which connect east and west.

Intercity roads, with reliable security, pass from among vast plateaus, forests, deserts, to give access to fabulous and historical cities as Isfahan, Shiraz, or some religious cities as Qom and Mashhad.

Knowing the abovementioned blessings we come to the fact that Iran is a peaceful and fascinating country — specially at a time when it is gaining unique experiences in politics and religion.

Perhaps, hostile countries would better know and understand Iran and do not make sanctions against this country. It is a matter of great surprise for the world that almost 19 years after the culmination of Islamic Revolution in Iran, millions of people give their lives to the revolution of the late supreme leader Imam Khomeini.

Western countries should understand the governing mechanisms in Iran to enjoy friendly relations with a country whose founder of revolution, we believe, was the leader of Islamic world in the present century.

If we accept our mistakes and avoid anti-Iran presuppositions, a bright future will await in the relations with this bright and powerful Middle East country.

During a 17-day visit to Iran, I discovered the truth about Iran and the fact that so far we have paid attention to such matters in the region as terrorism, security services, Middle East trouble-makers, religious activists, etc. all in vain. On the opposite, we could think of people in Iran who favor nothing but fulfillment of justice on earth.

The very short trip helped us know Iran better and clear the mind of adverse presuppositions against this country.

As in the case of women's right, I should confess they are freely active in different sectors of society.

We have no right to blame a country which is loyal to its Islamic principles. Once this country was filled with royal families, today it is filled with morality and the underprivileged strata are paid much attention.

The new Islamic governing system in Iran has taken eye-catching positive steps in international and national levels. This country is moving toward perfection in every field. A bright future is ahead for Iran.

Let us not hurry in our judgements, not judge upon subversive presupposition on Iran and study this country in a visit among hospitable people whose hospitality and belief are crystal clear."



Daily Food for Thought

On Amazement

And still they gazed, and still the wonder grew,
That one small head could carry all he knew.

OLIVER GOLDSMITH
The Deserted Village

Supplication of Kumayal

(14)

My Lord! My Lord! My Lord!
My Allah! My Master! My Protector!
Owner of my bondage!
O He in whose Hand is my forelock!
O He who knows my affliction and my misery!
O He who is aware of my poverty and indigence!
My Lord! My Lord! My Lord!
I ask You by Your Truth, Your Holiness and
the greatest of Your Attributes and Names,
that You make my times in the night and
the day inhabited by Your remembrance and
joined to Your service
and my acts acceptable to You,
so that my acts and my prayers
may all be a single litany and
my occupation with Your service everlasting.
My Master! O He upon whom I depend!
O He to whom I complain of my states!

Sculptor Arrested After Woman Recognizes Dead Man's Head

LONDON — A British sculptor who uses human corpses from which to mould his works has been arrested on suspicion of body-snatching and holding secret burials after a woman recognized a friend's face in an art show, police confirmed here Wednesday.

Anthony-Noel Kelly, whose work has been hailed by Prince Charles, is reported to use the heads, torsos and feet of dead people to mould plaster casts, which he then fills with glass-fiber and gilds with silver or gold.

After press coverage of his technique, a police spokesman said a specialist government officer known as her majesty's inspector of anatomy decided to investigate the 41-year-old artist, who works at the Prince of Wales' Institute of Architecture in central London.

Later at an exhibition in north London, a viewer was shocked to recognize the face of a deceased friend in a 4,500 pound (7,000 dollar) bust where part of the brain had been cut away.

The police became involved and Kelly was later arrested on suspicion of "theft and unauthorized burying of bodies," the spokesman for Scotland Yard said Wednesday.

The spokesman added that a number of body parts had also been found at two addresses, one in southwest London and the other in Kent, in southeast England.

(AFP)

Amature Artitsts Pay Homage to Late Imam Khomeini

Tehran Times Service

TEHRAN — Participants in the 2nd International Young Cinema Festival paid tribute to the Father of the Islamic Revolution, the Late Imam Khomeini, here on Tuesday afternoon coincided with the martyrdom anniversary of Imam Mohammad Taghi (AS), the 9th Imam of the Infallible Household of the Prophet Mohammad (S).

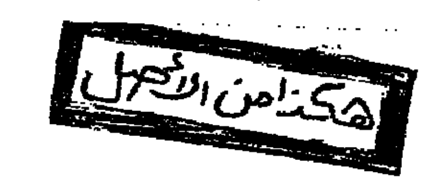
The participants in the Young Cinema festival, the 14th of its kind in National level, attending in the mausoleum of the late Imam Khomeini renewed their allegiance with the ideals of the Islamic Revolution.

The mass of 1,200 art students gathered to enhance the spiritual relation between art, love and religion. They promised to stand against the Western cultural assault and devote their time and energy to the sublime Islamic values.

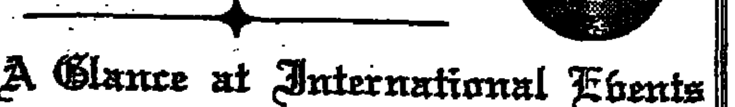
The managing director of the festival, Mohammad Hossein Soufi was also present in the ceremony. At the end of the ceremony the participants mourned for Imam Taghi (AS) and held evening congregational prayer.

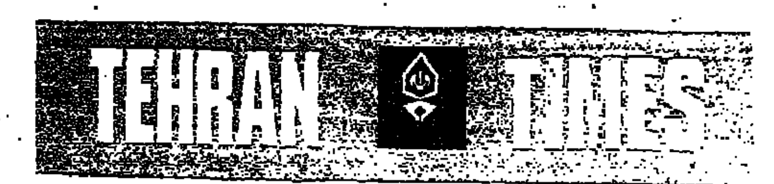
The festival is to conclude its work today.





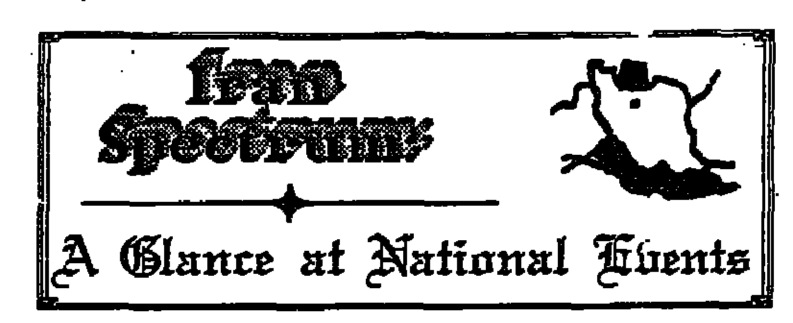
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Tehran Times Weekend Issue

THU. APR. 10, 1997; FARVARDIN 21, 1376; ZIL-HAJJEH 2, 1417



The World This Week

WORLD IN HIGHLIGHT

Wednesday, April 2

Italian, Albanian Leaders Meet on Rebel Territory

Italian and Albanian leaders held surprise, tightly-guarded, talks in a rebel-held Albanian town and reaffirmed plans for an Italian-led force of about 5,000 men to protect aid to the chaotic Balkan state.

Cambodia PM Presses for Independent Blast Inquiry

Cambodian co-premier Prince Norodom Ranariddh called for an independent investigation of a deadly weekend grenade attack, saying he did not trust an Interior Ministry inquiry.

French Doctors' Strike Widens, But Talks Planned

Junior doctors widened their three-week-old strike in French hospitals prompting the government to restart talks with the protesters.

Clashes Flare After Russia, Belarus Sign Treaty

Russia and Belarus signed a scaled-down union treaty which relieved wary liberals in Moscow but provoked clashes between police and protesters in the Belarussian capital.

Thursday, April 3

Earthquake in Southern Japan Injures Four

An earthquake measuring 5.5 on the Richter scale shook Japan's southern island of Kyushu injuring at least four people and causing landslides in the region.

S. Africa, UN Officials Meet Ahead of Zaire Talks

South African and UN officials met in Pretoria to wrap up arrangements for the first meeting between leaders of Zaire's warring factions, a spokesman said.

Friday, April 4

Mobutu Counters Tshisekedi in New Zairean Standoff

President Mobutu Sese Seko disagreed with new Prime Minister Etienne Tshisekedi over a transitional constitution, underlining their differences only 48 hours after the premier took over.

Protestors Stage Rally Against Bill to Support U.S. Bases in Okinawa

A crowd of 70 demonstrators stagged a rally in central Tokyo against a government bill which plans to allow U.S. forces to stay on Okinawa land after leases expire in May.

Israel Prevents Palestinian Pilgrims From Going to Mecca



Israel has turned back 37 Palestinians trying to leave the Gaza Strip to make the Muslim pilgrimage to Mecca, detaining one person, a Palestinian official said.

Saturday, April 5

Rebels Say Near, but Haven't Taken Diamond City



Rebels said they were just outside the heart of Zaire's diamond capital, and representatives of the government and insurgents met for their first direct peace talks.

NAM Keeps Afghan Talebans Out of Delhi Conference

Ministers' conference of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) said the Taleban militia which controls Afghanistan had no legitimate right to attend such meetings.

Colombia Prisoners Release Girl, Negotiations Begin to End Takeover



After panicked pleas by her mother and at a mediator's insistence, inmates have released a 14-year-old girl who had been taken hostage in a prison revolt that entered its third day.

Sunday, April 6

UN Prepares Airlift for Hutu Refugees, Zaire Peace Talks Move to Secret S. African Location

UN refugee officials began organizing an airlift of up to 100,000 Rwandan Hutu refugees stranded in the Zaire jungle, after the leader of Zaire's advancing for the flights.

Warring Afghan Factions Declare Cease-Fire

Rival Afghan factions have declared a truce to allow a UN-led polio vaccination campaign to go ahead, aid officials announced.

Monday, April 7

S. Korea's Hanbo Chief Admits Political Payments



The founder of South Korea's troubled Hanbo Group, in dramatic testimony broadcast live from Seoul jail, told a parliamentary inquiry he had donated money to President Kim Young-Sam's election campaign.

Non-Aligned Movement Conference Opens

UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan told members of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) Conference that he backed their demands for change within the United Nations.

Zairean Parliament Calls Off PM Ouster Debate

The Zairean Parliament called off a meeting at which it was to discuss the destitution of Prime Minister Etienne Tshisekedi, parliamentary sources said.

Tuesday, April 8

Settler Kills Palestinian in Al-Khalil

An Israeli settler shot and killed a Palestinian as new violence flared after a meeting between Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and U.S. President Bill Clinton failed to end the crisis in the peace process.

IRAN IN HIGHLIGHT

Wednesday, April 2

Iran Backs Islamic Unity

Iran's Foreign Ministry announced that the Islamic Republic is satisfied with the recent stance taken by the Arab League against the Israel regime's threatening policies and backs the Islamic Unity (among Muslim countries).

Thursday, April 3

Head of Iranian Hajj Pilgrims Meets Pakistani Pilgrims

A number of Pakistani *ulema* and pilgrims called on Iran's Amir-al-Hajj, Hojjatoleslam Mohammad Mohammadi Reyshahri and exchanged views on Islamic unity.

Human Rights Report Smells of Antigonism of Islamic Values

Foreign Ministry Spokesman Mahmoud Mohammadi strongly flayed the new report of the United Nations' special envoy of the human rights commission, Maurice Copithorne, as a kind of the West's critical conception of Islamic values.

Friday, April 4

Expansion of Tehran-Bangkok Cooperation Discussed

Thai speaker and Iranian Ambassador to Bangkok Ramin Mehmanparast in a meeting discussed economic and political cooperation between Tehran and Bangkok.

Ayat. Kashani Cautions Muslims Against Enemy Plots

Senior Alim Ayatollah Emami-Kashani in his Friday Prayer sermons at Tehran University cautioned Muslim states to be on alert against the plots and conspiracies of the enemies of islam.

Saturday, April 5

Ambassador of Uruguay Summoned to Foreign Ministry

The Uruguay ambassador to Tehran was summoned to Foreign Ministry following the Friday attack on Iranian Embassy in Montevideo.

New Thai, Australian Ambassadors Submit Credentials



The newly-appointed ambassadors of Thailand and



Australia to Tehran in separate meetings with President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, submitted copies of their credentials to him.

Price of Oil Products Increased

Price of oil products rose throughout the country, said a report by the Public Relations Department of the Iranian Oil Ministry.

Javanan Iran at "Bahman Cultural Center"

The 14th National Film Festival and Second International Youth Film Festival kicked off with a message from President Hashemi Rafsanjani at Bahman Cultural Center.

Sunday, April 6

Health Care Progress Looks Most Encouraging



President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani called the achievements of the country in the health care sector significant. He made the remark in a meeting with instructors of health care centers affiliated with the Health Ministry.

Monday, April 7

Leader Underlines Housing Foundation Services



The Leader of the Islamic Revolution, Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei appreciated the services rendered by the Islamic Revolution Housing Foundation.

President Rafsanjani Inaugurates Tabriz Petrochemical Complex



President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani inaugurated Tabriz Petrochemical Complex. Speaking at the inaugural ceremony of the complex, President Rafsanjani said, having world's second largest gas reserves and appropriate geographical location, *Iran is able to rank first in* the world's petrochemical industry.

Help Yourself Through the Hard Times

Some years ago I had what most would call the American Dream: a thriving construction business, a comfortable home, two new cars and a sailboat. Moreover, I was happily married. I had it all.

Then the stock market crashed, and suddenly no one was looking at the houses I'd built. Months of murderous interest payments gobbled up my savings. I couldn't make ends meet and lay awake nights in a cold sweat. Just when I thought things couldn't get worse, my wife announced that she wanted a divorce.

With no idea what to do next, I resolved literally to "sail off into the sunset," following the coastline from Connecticut to Florida. But somewhere off New Jersey I turned due east, straight out to sea. Hours later, I climbed up on the stern rail and watched the dark Atlantic slip beneath the hull. *How easy it would be to let the water take me, I thought.*

Suddenly the boat plummeted between two swells, knocking me offbalance. I grabbed the rail, my feet dragging in icy brine, and just managed to haul myself back on board. Shaken, I thought, *What's happening to me? I don't want to die.* From that moment, I knew I had to see things through. My old life was gone. Somehow I'd have to build a new one.

Everyone, at some point, will suffer a loss — the loss of loved ones, good health, a job. "It's your 'desert experience' — a time of feeling barren of options, even hope," explains Patrick Del Zoppo, a psychologist and bereavement specialist with the Archdiocese of New York. "The important thing is not to allow yourself to be stranded in the desert."

So, can we actually do things to help ourselves through bad times? As I discovered, you *can* take charge of your own cure. Here's how:

Let Yourself Grieve

Counselors agree that a period of grieving is critical. "There's no shame in this," says Del Zoppo. "Tears aren't a sign that you're simply feeling sorry for yourself but are an expression of sadness or emotion that must find an outlet."

And it doesn't matter if the grieving takes a while to surface, as long as it finally finds expression. Consider the case of Donna Kelb of Syracuse, N.Y. One spring day her 16-year-old son, Cliff, Jr., and 15-year-old son, Jimmy, were sanding their boat, preparing it for the season. Sudenly Donna heard a scream. Rushing outside, she found her two sons lying on the ground near the boat.

Jimmy had gone into the water and returned dripping wet. When he picked up the sander, he was electrocuted. Cliff, knocked to the ground by the current when he tried to grab the tool, recovered.

Donna was so numbed by this tragedy that she didn't cry for weeks — not even at the funeral. Then back at work one day, she began to feel dizzy. "Finally I went home, locked myself in my room and just wailed," she says. "It was as though this great weight was being lifted from my shoulders."

What Kelb experienced after her tragic loss was what Del Zoppo calls a "first-line defense that shields the consciousness from some extremely unpleasant reality." Kelb couldn't begin her healing process until nature had allowed her time to sort out her tragedy.

Understand Your Anger

"Anger is natural," says Del Zoppo, "but it can be released in a wholesome way." Properly understood, it can serve your recovery.

Candace Bracken's future seemed full of promise. The 25-year-old airline service coordinator had a new baby and a new job. Then one day, she began hemorrhaing uncontrollably. Acute leukemia was diagnosed, and Bracken was given two weeks to live. After the initial shock, she felt angry. "I had taken care of myself, lived a straight and narrow life," says Bracken of Miami. "Things like this weren't supposed to happen to people like me."

She reeled at the thought of her imminent death, and withdrew. "I just gave up," she says. Then a doctor told her she needed to arrange for someone to care for her daughter. "How dare you tell me to find someone else to raise my child!" Bracken snapped. At that moment, she realized that she had strong reasons to fight for her life. Her anger, formerly crippling, now sparked her. It helped see her through a harrowing, but ultimately successful, bone-marrow transplant.

Face the Challenge

Another obstacle on the road to health after a significant loss can be denial. Instead of facing what has happened to them, says Dr. Michael Aronoff, psychiatrist and a spokesperson for the American Psychiatric Association, many people "try to fill up that empty feeling looking for an escape." The man who rarely touched a drink will begin hitting the bottle. A woman who watched her weight will overeat. Others — like me — try literally to "run away."

After working for bosses all his life, John Jankowski of Staten Island, N.Y., had always longed to have his own options- and stock-trading firm. He finally got the start-up money and did well. Then came a downturn in business, and before long Jankowski was in serious financial trouble.

"It was like I'd run into a brick wall and my whole life had been shattered," he says. With financial resources exhausted, and the pressure of a family to support, Jankowski's thoughts turned to escape.

One morning, while on run, he just kept going. After jogging westward for two hours, he staggered back home. "It finally dawned on me that I couldn't run away from my troubles. The only thing that made sense was to face up to my situation," he says. "Admitting failure was the toughest part — but I had to before I could get on with my life."

Get Out and Do!

"After a few weeks, I urge people recovering from loss to get back into a routine," says psychiatrist and Boston University Professor Bessel A. van der Kolk. "It's important to force yourself to concentrate on things other than your hurt." Consider these activities:

Join a support group. Once you've made the decision to "get on with life," you'll need someone to talk to — and the most effective kind of conversation can be with someone else who has undergone an ordeal.

Read. When you can focus after the initial shock, reading — especially self-help books — can offer inspiration as well as relaxation.

Keep a journal. Many find comfort in creating an ongoing record of their experiences. At best it can serve as a kind of self-therapy.

Plan events. The idea that there are things to look forward to reinforces that you are forging ahead into a fresh future. Schedule that trip you've been postponing.

Learn new skills. Take a course at a community college, or take up a new hobby or sport. You have a new life ahead; any new skill will complement it.

Reward yourself. During highly stressful times, even the simplest daily chores — getting up, showering, fixing something to eat — can seem daunting. Consider every accomplishment, no matter how small, a victory to be rewarded.

Exercise. Physical activity can be especially therapeutic. Therese Gump of Chicago felt confused and adrift after her 21-year-old son committed suicide. A friend talked her into taking a jazzercize class. "It was just mindless stretching and bouncing to music," Gump says, "but it made me feel better physically, and when you feel better physically you feel better mentally."

"Exercise gets you out of your head and your troubles," Aronoff explains, "and it allows you to experience your body with your two feet on the ground."

Get Outside Yourself

"Many people who survive traumatic situations eventually find the need to take meaningful action," says Dr. van der Kolk. "They may start organizations, write books, work for awareness. Along the way they discover that a powerful way to help themselves lies in helping others."

You don't have to suddenly become an organizer to reach out to others. Irene Roberts, a 68-year-old medical sécretary in New York City, underwent grueling chemotherapy for ovarian and breast cancer. Throughout the experience, love from her family and friends, as well as prayer, helped Roberts maintain her humor and positive outlook.

Doctors and staff were touched by Roberts's optimism, and when she'd ask how they were feeling they would respond. "I'd just lie there and listen," she says with a twinkle in her eye, "never letting on that they were helping me more than I was helping them. The truth is that thinking of others rather than spending a lot of time thinking about myself played a huge role in my full recovery."

Be Patient With Yourself

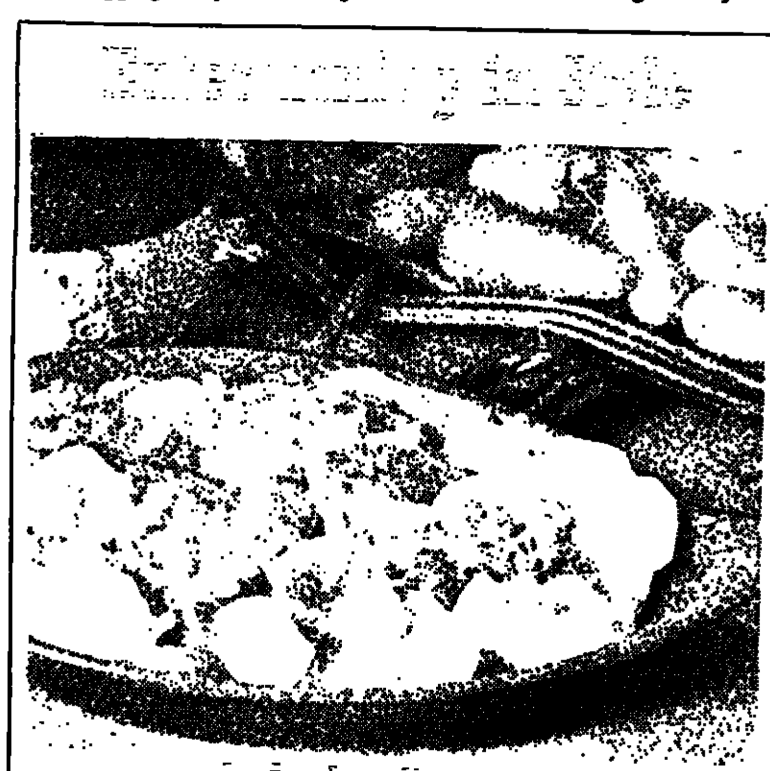
People often ask, "When will this terrible pain stop?" experts resist being pinned down to time frames. "Roughly, it's a minimum of six months before you even start to feel better," says Aronoff. "And it can be as long as a year, possible two. A lot depends on disposition, the support within your environment, and if you get help and work on it."

So, be easy on yourself. Recognize that you'll need time, and that your own pace of recovery may not fit with that of others. Congratulate yourself at each step through grief: I'm still here, I've made it this far!

Sailing is a slow business. I made it to Florida in five weeks. In attempting to "run away," I'd embarked on a trip that gave me a structure, a daily outdoor routine requiring physical exertion, and plenty of time. I was still hurting, but by the time I anchored in Miami, I was ready to try again. At what, I wasn't sure.

"Why not get back to writing — to what you were trained for?" said my dad over the phone. He was right. And here I am now, writing to you. It feels good to be back.

(Courtesy the Reader's Digest)



Irish Stew

You will need...

2½ lb. middle neck of lamb
2 large onions, sliced
8 oz. carrots, sliced
1 lb. potatoes, peeled and sliced
salt and pepper
few sprigs parsley

Preparation time
20 minutes
Cooking time
2 hours 30 minutes
Oven setting
335°F; gas mark 3
350°F; gas mark 4

Cut lamb in neat pieces and remove the spinal cord. Put layers of meat, onion, carrot and potato into a 3-pint ovenproof casserole, seasoning each layer with salt and pepper and finishing with a layer of potato.

Pour in just enough water to come half way up the casserole. Cover with a lid and cook in a very moderate oven for 2 hours or until the meat is nearly tender.

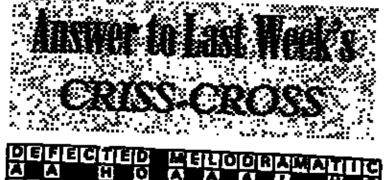
Remove lid, increase the oven to moderately hot and cook for a further half hour or until the top layer of potato is golden brown. Place in a serving dish and decorate with parsley.

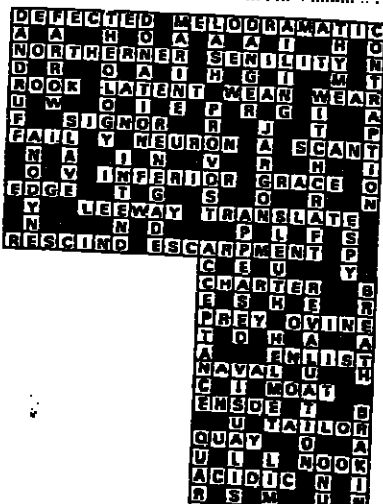
Serves 4.

QUICK TIP

If you prefer no bones in stew use lamb fillets cut from scrag ends of neck instead of middle neck.











Feature

Facets of Countries

Spotlight: Hong Kong

The Streetcars of Hong Kong



Hong Kong's trams provide the tourist a number of visually arresting images of the island.

Ox carts and mules never figured in the transport history of Hong Kong. The stately sedan chair has not been in use for a long time now and the passenger wheelbarrow (rickshaw) could not survive the constant spurts of development that Hong Kong has been experiencing.

Rickshaws, however, can still be sighted at the ferry-terminal looking for tourists who are willing to pay just to be photographed alongside.

But the streetcars, or trams as they are more popularly known, have outlived them all. In a world where trams are considered outdated and slow, people in Hong Kong still rely on this cheap and efficient mode of transport. In fact, their environment friendly feature—since they are zero-emission vehicles that run on electricity—is a major drawcard encouraging several cities in the West to put trams back on their streets.

Hong Kong trams made their debut 90 years ago in July, 1904, just seven months after the first powered aircraft took off. In the early days, the trams carried first and third class passengers in enclosed and "toast rack" single-decker cars. But with increasing passenger traffic, fully enclosed double-decker cars were introduced in 1912 to serve both classes.

Today, there are a total of 163 trams in the now single-class fleet, which includes two "antique" trams that have still retained an open deck and featuring some turn-of-the-century fittings. These two vintage trams are usually used by mobile revellers for throwing parties on board, while enjoying a tour of the island.

During peak hours on normal working days, 155 of these trams ply the tracks carrying nearly 350,000 passengers every day.

Although several competing modes of transport have proliferated in recent years, the trams contime to attract a large number of faithful commuters, especially the elderly and short-haul commuters.

Years ago, the tramline ran along the waterfront, but following extensive reclamation, the tram tracks have been pushed several hundred meters away from the sea.

A proximity to the sea they may lack, but a ride on the tram is still the best way to explore Hong Kong. Running all the way from Shau Kei Wan *in the east to* Kennedy Town in the west, the trams traverse a 15.5-kilometer track on the northern side of Hong Kong, provinding from their drop windows a number of visually arresting images of the island as they pass through a keleidoscope of urban settings.

Glittering skyscrapers, outdoor markets with wares spilling onto the street, rows of dried seafood shops and a waterfront dotted with barges are just some of the vignettes you can catch while on a tram ride in Hong Kong.

(Courtesy of Emirates inflight magazine, Nov. 1994)





Travelogue

The Million Years Stone Park and Pattaya Crocodile Farm

Located on a nearly-40 acre piece of land just 15 minutes' ride from Pattaya this park and farm, which is a new striking tourist attraction created for all nature lovers, is the product of more than 20 years effort. It contains much more than what its name suggests. It is not only a living museum of cuious and beautiful things of all the three kingdoms, animal, vegetable and mineral, but it also offers you several kinds of amusing and exciting shows. Among the numerous wonders you will see here are the following:



A beautiful garden of rare trees and colorful flowers.

Exotic Plants



A trained tree over 200 years old in the Ayutthaya style.

A petrified tree over a million years old.



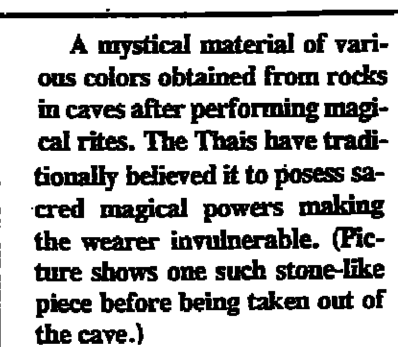
Award-winning bonsai trees.

Strange Rocks



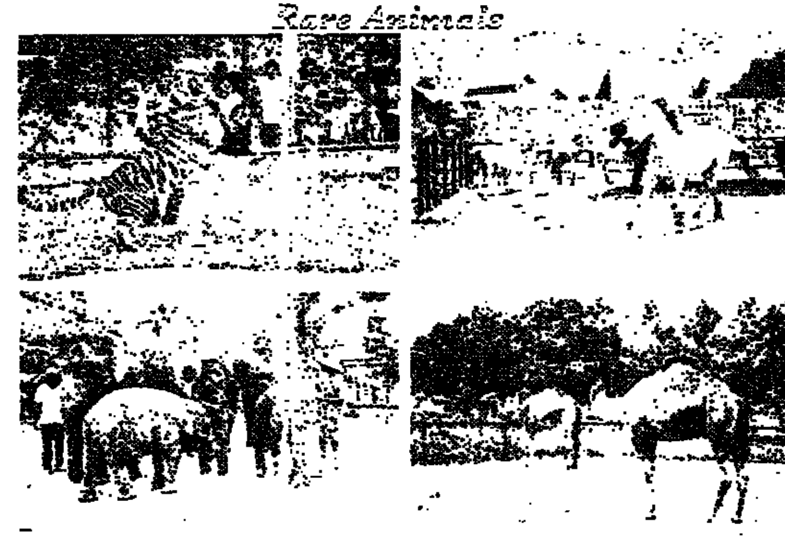
Rocks of grotesque shapes and shaped like animals, weighing up to 75 tons each.

A mystical material of various colors obtained from rocks in caves after performing magical rites. The Thais have traditionally believed it to posess sacred magical powers making the wearer invulnerable. (Picture shows one such stone-like piece before being taken out of the cave.)





Rare Animals



Elephants, camels, lions, tigers, bears, several species of deer, etc.

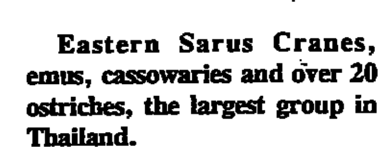


Thousands of crocodiles, both saltwater and freshwater, living in shady natural surroundings.

A shoal of snakehead fish of the Amazon.

Thepha fish, a most graceful but endangered species of Thailand.

The intelligent albino bear and other albino animals—horses, cows, crocodiles.



Eastern Sarus Cranes, emus, cassowaries and over 20 ostriches, the largest group in Thailand.

Daily Shows



Live crocodile playing with a man's head.



Man catching crocodile with bare hands.

(Courtesy of Thai Ministry of Tourism pamphlets)

1961 — Adolf Eichmann, former Nazi, is put on trial as war criminal in an Israeli court in Jerusalem.

1972 — United States and Soviet Union sign treaty banning biological warfare.

1976 — Israel goes ahead with elections in occupied West Bank of Jordan despite rioting.

1986 — United States conducts nuclear test in Nevada desert despite growing protests among peace groups and strong Soviet campaign for nuclear test ban.

1987 — 151-nation International Monetary Fund wraps up spring meeting without producing any new initiatives.

1989 — British and Australian forces arrive in northern Namibia to monitor planned withdrawal of black nationalist guerrillas.

1992 — Two people are killed and 47 wounded in a carbomb explosion in London's financial district.

1993 — Chris Hani, one of South Africa's top black leaders, is shot and killed.

CANDID CAMERA



Photo: Mojtaba Tahin

TOMORROW IN HISTORY

1953 — United Nations force and Communists arrange for exchange of prisoners in Korea. Vietnamese insurgents renew offensive in Laos.

1973 — Martin Bormann, Nazi official pursued throughout world, is officially declared dead and taken off West Germany's "most wanted" list.

1987 — China's National People's Congress ends annual session after endorsing Premier Shay Ziyang's centrist policies and removing nation's top security official.

1990 — Angolan government agrees to begin peace talks with UNITA in Portugal.

1991 — UN Security Council announces a formal end to the Persian Gulf War, accepting Iraqis pledge that it will pay for war damages ,and scrap its weapons of mass destruction.

1993 — Two whites in South Africa are burned to death by a black crowd despite appeals for calm, a day after top black leader Kris Hani was assassinated

By: D. H. Barber

The latest book of my poems has not been selling very well – in fact 122 of my personal friends and relations tell me they've bought it, but the publishers say only 84 copies have been sold. So the general public seem to have received it rather coldly.

"The trouble is," said Edith, "that nobody has ever heard of you; and those who have heard of you don't want to again. What you need is a little advertisement. Let people know that you exist and that you write poetry, and they will all rush along to the libraries and ask for your latest book."

"But I can't just put an advertisement in the newspaper saying I'm a poet."

Edith though for a moment and then said that she had a bright idea.

"Why not put an advertisement in *The Times*," she said, "saying that you recommend as butler in a small family a man who has been in your employment for 20 years?"

"But I haven't' had anybody in my employment for twenty years," I said. "And I've never kept a butler of any sort, as you know very well. And how could I sell more copies of my poems by pretending that I wanted to find work for a non-existent butler who hasn't been in my employment for 20 years?"

"You're not very bright this morning," said Edith. "Don't you know that the most successful sort of advertisement is the sort that doesn't look like and advertisement? You ought to do something like this."

She got a piece of paper and a pen and wrote the following:

Mr. L. Conkleshill, the poet (author of *Raspberry Bushes and Other Poems*) strongly recommends as butler in a small family his present head man, who has been with him for 20 years."

"The idea is not bad," I said,' "but I refuse to do anything so dishonest. And if the plan didn't work, it would mean money thrown away. I won't do it myself, and moreover I absolutely forbid *you* to do it..."

As a matter of fact I secretly rather liked the idea; and I thought that when I absolutely forbade Edith to do it, she would pay the money herself and send in the advertisement. I could then speak to her severely about disobeying my orders, save my money and sell more books.

For some days, however, she did nothing, although I was careful to keep reminding her that I had absolutely forbidden her to send in the advertisement.

"I expect to be obeyed in such matters," I said several times a day. Nearly always this sort of treatment produces the desired effect, but you can never depend on a woman. Although I looked in *The Times* every morning, the advertisement didn't appear. Edith went away to stay with a sick aunt, and I forgot all about the matter.

Then came the event of The Man With the Dog.

He was a big man, and the dog was a big dog, and they both stood outside the front door and made noises at me.

"I'll take the money now," said the man in a bad-tempered voice.

"What money is this?" I said politely. "Something due for milk supplied?"

"Nonsense," said the man. "Two pounds I want for the dog."

"I don't want a dog," I said uncertainly. Ours was a lonely sort of road, and the man was a big sort of man, and it would perhaps be wiser to buy the dog.

"Don't *want* the dog!" said the man in an unpleasant voice. "You calmly let me come here all the way from Hampstead with this cursed dog, and then tell me that you don't *want* him..."

At last I bought the dog for thirty shillings. I was weak, perhaps, but Edith had been saying for a long time that we ought to have a dog. In any case, I was in the middle of writing a poem, and if the man had knocked me down I shouldn't have been able to catch the five o'clock post.

I gave the dog some meat and locked him in the kitchen, and went back to my poem. Then the bell rang again, and I found two men on the step, both with large dogs.

This time I didn't argue. I just shut the door and went and looked at myself in the glass. I was worried. Were the dogs real? I went up to my bedroom and looked down the long road that leads to the station. I could see six men with six dogs.

Then the solution of the problem came to me, and I looked at the *Lost and Found* advertisements in *The Times*.

Mr. L. Conkleshill offers 2 pounds reward for the return of his faithful, dog Ogo, who first awakened the ideas in *Faithful Eyes* in his new book of poems."

Edith said afterwards that I hadn't told her she mustn't put in an advertisement about a *dog*.

Choose the correct word in the following conversation.

SAADIA: There's a lot of beautiful **1**....*Scenery* ....in Japan.

KAMAL: That's right. But a lot of people think it's full of **2** ....towns.

SAADIA: I'd love to visit Japan. I'm always impressed by the quality of Japanese **3** ....

KAMAL: Yes, they're very good. I'm afraid our companies spend too much money on **4** .... and not enough on research.

SAADIA: The other day I picked up a magazine to **5** .... the time while was waiting to see the dentist. It said that **6** .... the Japanese had started producing good-quality **7**.................... . Then I looked inside my new suit and saw there was a **8** .... with Japanese writing on it. So that was made in Japan too!

KAMAL: The Japanese always seem very **9** .... people.

SAADIA: Sometimes, but not always. When my father visited Japan a few years ago, there was a huge **10** .... outside Narita Airport. The farmers were very angry about something.

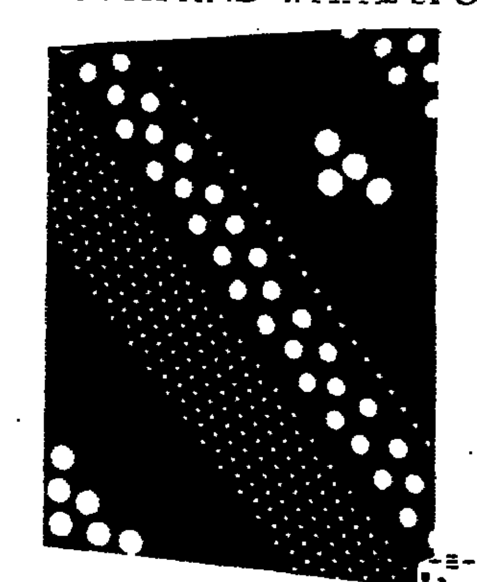
1 landscape / scenery
2 industrious / industrial
3 products / manufactures
4 advertising / propaganda
5 pass / spend
6 ultimately / lately
7 clothing / clothings
8 mark / label
9 glad / happy
10 demonstration / manifestation

ANSWER KEY

1 scenery 2 industrial 3 products 4 advertising 5 pass 6 lately 7 clothing 8 label 9 happy 10 demonstration



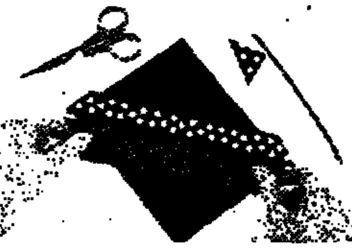
BLACK AND WHITE SPOTS

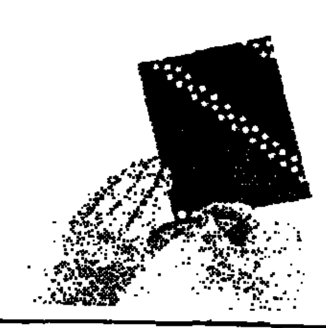


Diagonal lines of spotted ribbon and self-adhesive labels give this card a 'dotty' air. Cut a piece of black card 25 by 16cm (10 by 6¼in). Score and fold 12.5cm (5in). On inside top left-hand corner measure 4cm (1½in) along top of card and down side edge, mark with dots and score. Fold corner back to outside of card.



Rule a diagonal line across front of card from top left to bottom right. Measure and cut ribbons to fit either side of this line. Cut them slightly longer, to be trimmed later. Cut a triangle of ribbon to fit behind turned-down corner. Spray backs of ribbon with glue in spray booth. Place in position, smooth down and trim edges.





On front bottom left-hand corner of card, stick on self-adhesive dots and also on folded-over, top right-hand corner.

